

Hafa Adai!

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San Nicolas is new IPI lawyer

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER



San Nicolas

Former CNMI attorney general and Tinian mayor Joey Patrick San Nicolas has been hired by casino/resort operator Pacific International (CNMI) LLC to replace Phillip J. Tydingco as IPI's chief legal counsel.

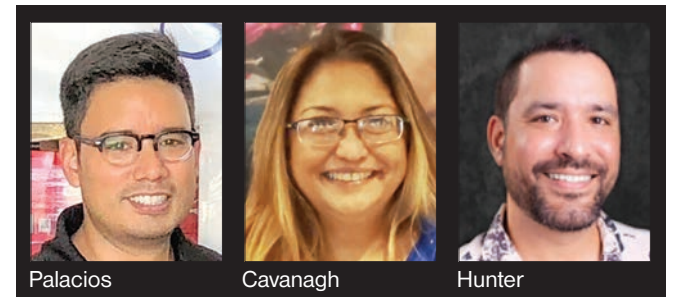
A source in the CNMI Bar Association confirmed yesterday that San Nicolas is replacing Tydingco as IPI's general counsel and that he will start part-time as he has to close

down his law office.

The source is not sure, though, as to when San Nicolas will start his part-time work with IPI.

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3 up for Business Person of the Year plum



By **MARK RABAGO**
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Three stalwarts of the CNMI business community are on the shortlist for the Saipan Chamber of Commerce 2019 Business Person of the Year award that will be announced during the BPOY Gala on Jan. 25, 2020.

Chamber executive director Maxine Laszlo said the three finalists for the prestigious award are Gloria Cavanagh of Pacific Islands Club Saipan, Glen Hunter of The Shack,

and Bo Palacios of J.C. Tenorio Enterprises.

"Gloria Cavanagh, Glen Hunter, and Bo Palacios were all nominated by their Cham-

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Sewer overflow floods San Jose road

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Residents near the San Jose Church complained yesterday morning about a problematic sewerline on a portion of Apengagh Avenue in San Jose that flooded the road with sewer water and threw up a cloud of stench that a

» **CUC executive director says problem has been addressed**

father said was triggering the asthma of his children.

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Gary P. Camacho said the incident, which he said was caused by the loose coupling, has been addressed.

"The pipes are reconnected and the spilled waste has been neutralized in the

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A portion of Apengagh Avenue is flooded with sewage water from an overflowing sewerline yesterday morning. Inset, a San Jose resident points to the flooded portion of the road. When the photo was taken, the water had already subsided. A man who lives in the area said that the bad odor is triggering his children's asthma.

NEIL FAMA/FERDIE DE LA TORRE

INSIDE



LOCAL

The Tan Siu Lin Foundation is the CNMI Scholarship Provider of the Year.

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BUSINESS

Free In Saipan was launched in June 2019 with an eye toward simplicity.

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ASIA

A fire engulfed a building in India's capital, killing at least 43 people.

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Local

Sablan: OPA playing central role in FBI probe

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Responding to questions of some netizens why the Office of the Public Auditor and Office of the Attorney General seem to be silent in the investigation being conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Rep. Christina Sablan (Ind-Saipan) said yesterday it is her understanding that OPA played a central role in

conducting this investigation against Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and several others.

She is unsure, though, as to the Office of the Attorney General's involvement in the investigation.

OPA has been working side by side with federal investigators for a long time, said Sablan.

The lawmaker said photos of OPA investigators working with the FBI during the raids last month were even published by

local media.

"So, of course, OPA won't comment on any ongoing case. Neither would the FBI," she said.

With respect to the OAG, Sablan said she would hope that the OAG is supporting and assisting the investigation, particularly if violations of local laws are implicated.

"After all, the OAG has a



Sablan

mandate to combat public corruption too," the lawmaker pointed out.

Sablan recently stated that the CNMI House of Representatives has enough cause to open an inquiry—independent of any criminal investigation—related to the ongoing FBI probe of Torres and several others.

"Any impeachment process, should we come to that, would be separate from the criminal process, though evidence that is presented in criminal proceeding may be examined by the Legislature as well," she had said.

Torres chief of staff, Angel Demapan, had taken issue with that, describing it as "political posturing" and nothing more than self-serving talk.

The House will hold a

session today, Tuesday, at 10:30pm. Sources said the session "will be very interesting." Sources refused to elaborate.

The FBI is looking into multiple possible violations of federal laws that involve Torres, his family, and Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, and other persons, resulting in the execution of search warrants on several sites last Nov. 7 and 8.

SIS student gets full college ride through QuestBridge

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

Saipan International School senior Malika Miyawaki was recently awarded a QuestBridge Scholarship, a full four-year scholarship that is handed to only a little over 1,000 high school seniors across the United States.

Miyawaki is set to pursue her higher education at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia beginning in the fall of 2020 through her QuestBridge scholarship.

According to Miyawaki, although she has yet to make up her mind, she is leaning toward pursuing a degree in Business.

On top of pursuing a college education, Miyawaki is even happier to fulfill her childhood dream of a full college experience without burdening her family.

"I am not 100% sure about my major yet but I am looking at Business. All my hard work was for this victory. I really wanted the full ride and didn't want to be a burden for my family. I did it because a full ride has been my dream since I was young. I didn't care where I would go as long as I got a full ride," she said.

The QuestBridge National College Match is a national program that connects high-achieving high school seniors with full four-year scholarships with some of the nation's top colleges. Out of 14,926 applicants, QuestBridge selected 5,842 finalists. Of the finalists, 1,127 students were selected as this year's Match Scholarship Recipients, one of them being Miyawaki. The scholarship grant covers the recipient's tuition, room and board, health insurance, and other costs.

Miyawaki said she was very emotional throughout the application process that began in September. She added that she felt she had not done enough during high school



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan International School senior Malika Miyawaki was recently awarded a QuestBridge Scholarship.

and was worried she wouldn't get in. However, she could not explain the joy and relief when she found out she had been chosen.

"I never felt that happy in my life. My mom was so happy. She hugged me tight when I got it. She barely talked about college before...because she didn't want to make me even more nervous," she said.

Miyawaki had first to apply to QuestBridge by the due date, Sept. 26, 2019, and was chosen as a finalist on Oct. 16, 2019.

"The process was very tiring. To become a finalist, I wrote a lot. After I became a finalist, I had to write many supplements. I am sure I spent at least 100 hours on this process," she said.

Any U.S. citizen/permanent resident, or non-U.S. citizen who live in the U.S. can apply. Being a finalist meant you could apply at any of QuestBridge's 40 partner schools for free.

SIS headmaster Ron Snyder said they are proud of Miyawaki and are very happy that she has been named as their first QuestBridge scholar and the third in the CNMI.



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*The opt-in promotion ends on January 16, 2020. The promotion is open to members of the Mobil Smiles Driver Rewards™ program whose membership is registered in Saipan. Only online form submissions with the promotion code are eligible for the promotion. Bonus points will be credited to the Saipan member's account approximately 4 to 6 weeks after the Promotion Period. You may unsubscribe from receiving electronic promotional communications at any time. If you wish to opt-out from receiving promotional messages, please call our Mobil Smiles Driver Rewards Customer Service Center at 1-866-486-7751 and they will assist you.

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Federal probationer found using 'ice' anew

The U.S. Probation Office has found that Francisco N. Basa, a federal probationer who had been found violating the conditions of his supervision several times, had been found to have used methamphetamine or "ice" again.

U.S. probation officer Gregory F. Arriola informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI that Basa used methamphetamine last Nov. 21 in violation of the condition of his supervision.

Arriola recommended that the U.S. District Court for the NMI revoke or modify the term of Basa's supervision.

District Court Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona summoned Basa last Friday to appear in court this Thursday at 1:30pm to explain why his supervision should not be revoked. Basa was served with the summons yesterday.

Arriola said that Basa violated the mandatory condition of his supervision that requires him to refrain from any unlawful use of a controlled substance.

Arriola said that Basa reported to the U.S. Probation Office last Nov. 22 and was subjected to an unobserved drug test by U.S. probation officer. Arriola said the test panel indicated presumptive positive result for the use of

methamphetamine.

When confronted with the results, Basa admitted to the officer that he used the drug the previous day to help him stay awake, Arriola said.

The probation officer said that Basa met with him last Nov. 29 for a noncompliance meeting. This time, Arriola said, Basa stated he used methamphetamine because he wanted to get caught.

Arriola said Basa explained that he was scared to finish up his term of supervised release early and was fearful of reverting back to his old ways. He said Basa agreed to avoid any further drug use.

Arriola said that Basa continues to report to his counseling sessions and to undergo random drug tests as instructed.

Basa has been employed since Aug. 17, 2019.

In 2006, the court sentenced him to four years and six months imprisonment for conspiracy to distribute 50 grams of methamphetamine. He was placed on probation after completing the prison term.

The court had revoked defendant's supervised release several times in the past for violating the conditions of the terms of his probation. Most of his violations was for using "ice."

Basa was released on Jan. 26, 2016, to allow him to enter the Drug Offender Re-entry Program. His term of supervised release began on Jan. 26, 2016.

Arriola said Basa's progress in the DORE Program was marginal.

On April 22, 2016, Basa received a 24-hour jail sanction. On May 24, 2016, he received

a one-week jail sanction, which was suspended.

On June 29, 2016, he received a seven-day jail sanction, to include a term of location monitoring.

On Oct. 4, 2016, he failed to earn credit. On Oct. 25, 2016, he received a 21-day jail sanction. On Dec. 20, 2016, he was terminated from the DORE Program, and received a two-

month jail sanction.

It was ordered that he return to traditional supervision upon his release from imprisonment on Feb. 20, 2017.

On April 11, 2017, Basa's term of supervised release was revoked for failure to follow the instructions of the probation officer and multiple missed drug testing, and counseling sessions.

He received a sentence of 24 months imprisonment, followed by an 18-month term of

supervised release. His fifth term of supervised release began on Dec. 21, 2018, and was set to expire on June 20, 2020.

On Dec. 28, 2018, a status conference was held shortly after Basa was released from the Bureau of Prisons.

During the hearing, Manglona informed Basa that she would exercise the court's authority to terminate his term of supervised release early if he could remain sober for a 12-month period.

Arriola said that, on July 25, 2019, a report on offender under supervision was filed after Basa was arrested by local law enforcement officers for the offenses of disturbing the peace and assault and battery.

Arriola said the CNMI Office of the Attorney General later declined to prosecute the case. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*



DCCAVILLE

Dozens of children had fun at the kickoff lighting ceremony of the 2019 Christmas Village last Saturday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

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CNMI Got Talent this weekend

The most anticipated talent competition of the year, the annual CNMI Got Talent, is set for this weekend at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan. Bridge Capital LLC is still set to host its 9th edition of the competition on Dec. 14 starting at 6pm.

As always, CNMI's Got Talent will be a Christmas-themed event and will feature a range of talents, including vocal and instrumental music of many genres, dances, and more.

This year's CNMI Got Talent will actually be a resumption since it was postponed last year as a result

of Super Typhoon Yutu that wreaked havoc on the CNMI in October 2018.

The talent competition last year was not actually a competition, but featured all previous winners for a free entertainment show for a community still reeling from Yutu.

The entire community is invited to witness the talent found in the CNMI. For additional information, feel free to contact Bridge Capital at 322-2222. **(Kimberly Bautista)**

Motion to dismiss contractor's suit vs ex-DFEMS chief, fire inspector denied

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The federal court has denied the motion of former Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services Commissioner Claudio K. Norita and a DFEMS fire inspector to dismiss a lawsuit filed against them by a construction contractor.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona stated that there is little doubt that Norita's and co-defendant fire inspector Anthony Babauta's alleged actions, if true, violated the Due Process Clause in connection with Double A Corp.'s lawsuit.

In its lawsuit filed last March, Double A is suing Norita and Babauta for allegedly causing it to lose \$410,150 in a potential contract when they refused to accept its permit application.

Double A, which specializes in installing fire suppression systems, is suing the defendants for deprivation of property interest and deprivation of a liberty interest without due process.

Norita and Babauta, through the Office of the Attorney General, filed a motion for summary judgment on the grounds of qualified immunity. The motion basically seeks dismissal of the lawsuit.

In her order last Tuesday that denied the defendants' motion, Manglona ruled that the first and second prongs of a qualified immunity analysis are satisfied, and that Norita and Babauta's motion for summary

judgment based on qualified immunity fails.

Qualified immunity refers to protection to an official who "reasonably but mistakenly believed that his or her conduct did not violate a clearly established constitutional right."

Manglona pointed out that the issue at this stage is not whether Double A has enough evidence to potentially win at trial. Instead, Manglona said, the only question is whether Double A alleged a violation of a clearly established constitutional right.

"Any factual arguments must wait until the close of discovery when the record is fleshed out," the judge pointed out.

Manglona said that, at the Nov. 21 hearing, Norita's counsel conceded that the fire code did require Double A to obtain a permit before installing a sprinkler system.

"In other words, withholding the permit served as a complete prohibition to Double A's occupation of installing fire sprinklers," said Manglona, adding that Double A therefore had a valid liberty interest in securing the permit.

The judge said viewing the disputed facts most favorably to Double A, as the court must do on summary judgment, Norita and Babauta did not give even minimal due process.

At the very least, Manglona said, they could not deny the permit without notifying Double A of their reasons and offering

a meaningful opportunity to respond.

Manglona said the fire code recognizes this, stating: "If the application or the construction documents do not conform to the requirements of pertinent laws, the fire code official shall reject such application in writing, stating the reasons therefor."

Instead, the judge said, Norita and Babauta rebuffed Double A's inquiries and gave only a terse, verbal rationale that they denied the permit due to

a past installation error involving "speaker wire."

Manglona said that explanation was inadequate because it did not include any corresponding legal basis for denying the application on those grounds.

Manglona said Norita and Babauta did not inform Double A of any section of fire code or other law empowering them to consider past installation errors when reviewing an application.

The judge said both Norita and Babauta in their affidavits both claim that the list Double A refers to is merely a record of who has obtained permits in the past and does not bar anyone else from a receiving one.

In his affidavit, Norita alleges that he never reviewed or denied Double A's application.

Babauta in his affidavit, by contrast, refutes Double A's allegations on the grounds that he does not have the final authority to grant a permit, and that he was not at work in November 2017 when the alleged

encounters occurred.

Manglona said that, according to the complaint, it was on Nov. 3, 2017, when Double A reached an agreement with Proper Grand to perform the fire sprinkler system installation work.

Manglona said declarations from Double A's project manager Antonie Santos and business consultant, Thomas S. Salas, state that the application and follow-up meetings began in December 2017 and continued into January 2018.

Yet, Manglona said, Babauta only claims that, due to a leave from work, he never reviewed any applications submitted the month before.

The judge said regardless, even if both affidavits squarely denied every word of Salas' declaration, that would merely create a factual issue for trial.

"It is not the role of the court on summary judgment to weigh competing affidavits," Manglona pointed out.

In its lawsuit, Double A, through counsel Joseph E. Horey, asked the court to hold Norita and Babauta liable to pay the company an unspecified amount of damages, court costs, and attorney's fees.

According to Horey in the complaint, on Oct. 20, 2017, Double A submitted a quotation to Proper Grand CNMI LLC for the fire sprinkler system installation work in a complex of buildings operated by Proper Grand known as Sugar King Dormitory.

Horey said Proper Grand agreed to hire Double A for the project at a price of \$410,150.



Norita

PERSON

From Page 1

ber peers as business leaders who went above and beyond in 2019," said Chamber president Velma Palacios in an email to *Saipan Tribune*.

She said considerations for BPOY include the nominee's community involvement and contributions, support for the local workforce, and active participation in the Chamber.

"We're honored these three

individuals are a part of our Chamber of Commerce and continually support our community," added Palacios.

Cavanagh is the general manager of Pacific Island Club Saipan. She is also the chairwoman of the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, a board member of the Northern Marianas Business Alliance, and vice chairperson of the Marianas Visitors Authority.

Hunter is the owner of three Chamber member companies:

The Shack, the Airstream, Go Hydro. He has been a member of the Chamber for the last 13 years (Pacific Trading Co., then Transpacific, then The Shack). Most recently, he's been actively engaged with the membership committee, helping with new membership orientations, mentoring new entrepreneurs at Pitchfest, and co-conducting trainings for the Saipan Young Professionals.

Palacios is the business development manager of J.C.

Tenorio Enterprises, which owns the slew of Joeten supermarkets in the CNMI.

He is also the president of the Commonwealth Cancer Association and is the Republican National Committeeman for the NMI.

Officially established in 1976, the Chamber now has 142 members ranging from sole-proprietorships, large resort hotels, service companies, tour agencies, and insurance firms, to construction companies.

LAWYER

From Page 1

Tydingco's last day with IPI is this Friday.

Saipan Tribune sought to obtain comments from San Nicolas yesterday, but he had yet to reply as of press time.

IPI later confirmed San Nicolas' appointment in a press release.

San Nicolas served as CNMI attorney general from 2012 to 2014 during the term of then-governor Benigno R. Fitial. While AG, San Nicolas was a member of the Nation-

al Association of Attorneys General. He served as mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan from January 2015 to January 2019.

After his term as mayor expired, San Nicolas opened his law firm on Saipan that focuses on civil law, family law, criminal defense, probate law, and corporate law.

San Nicolas is a graduate of Mitchell Hamline School of Law in Minnesota in 2003. He is licensed to practice law in the CNMI Superior and Supreme courts, U.S. District Court for the NMI, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

SEWER

From Page 1

affected area," Camacho said.

Residents told *Saipan Tribune* that a crew from CUC had been draining a manhole on the road and that may have something to do with the sewage water overflowing into the road.

"My kids are becoming asthmatic already. The smell is really bad. We cannot even eat," a resident who requested anonymity told *Saipan Tribune*.

The resident said he called the CUC Trouble Desk yesterday and was told by a staff that the sewer department was closed as it was a holiday. Yesterday was CNMI Constitution Day.

The resident said a CUC crew did arrive in the area during lunch time and covered the sewer water with a white substance to minimize the bad odor. Camacho later said that the white substance is lime being spread on the water on the road to neutralize the odor.

The San Jose resident said a CUC crew has been draining the sewage from a manhole in the area for two weeks now and there is always overflow on the road every time they do it.

Another resident said there's a lot of CUC vehicles in their area during the draining operation that has been ongoing for a month now. She said sometimes they could not sleep due to the noise coming from a machine whenever the

repair/operation is done until midnight.

Another resident recalled that a cargo truck fell last month into a hole when a portion of the side of the road collapsed. At the time, CUC or its contractor had left a small hole uncovered after trying to fix the sewerline. The sewage water had flooded the road and the driver of the truck did not notice the small hole. When the truck moved forward on the small hole atop a sewerline, it collapsed. This caused the vehicle to fall into about 3- to 4-foot deep hole.

Camacho said that CUC operators were at the collapsed asbestos cement pipe site located on Apengagh Avenue to run the bypass system around 11:30am yesterday. Camacho said this bypass system is run daily to minimize sewer overflows into the ground.

"A coupling on the bypass line became loose and popped out when the trash pump was turned on," said Camacho, adding that the estimated amount of sewer overflow is 10 gallons.

He said operators at the site reconnected the coupling on the bypass system area where the sewer overflowed.

CUC has already reported this incident to the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality as part of standard operating procedures.

Camacho said the causes of the collapsed sewerline was due to the aged infrastructure. He said CUC is in the process of identifying funds to replace the whole segment of the collapsed sewerline.

Make a child's wish come true this Christmas

This Christmas, help make a child's wish come true. Through the wish-granting power of the Make-a-Wish

Foundation, you can help grant wishes of children who have critical illnesses.

"Make-a-Wish allows chil-

dren to have one wish," board member Kanae Quinn said, "whether it is to meet some-

body, to go somewhere, to "to anyone who has loved and lost and learned to love again."

Shor lives now in New York City with his wife Jie Hua (who he met on Saipan) and their daughter Fan. Since leaving Saipan, Shor has acted in TV shows such as *Blue Bloods*, *Bull*, and *Jessica Jones*, in indie films, as well as on stage in New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota. He said he misses Saipan dearly and plans to visit in the near future. (PR)

have something that they have always wanted and never had an opportunity, and to just forget about their medical condition for a little moment and have a wish come true."

Make-a-Wish tries to help families who struggle with medical costs, through donations received from private entities. The children, who are referred to as Wish Kids, have critical illnesses, and have to face difficulties in their physical conditions.

"A lot of the wishes are for travel to the states for Disneyland, a concert, or something fun," Quinn said. There are also those who wish for a gaming package or maybe

electronics products.

Doing that doesn't come cheap for the foundation, hence its need for donors. "The wishes do cost quite a bit of money because of the airfare and all that [comes with it]," Quinn said. "The average wish [costs] over \$7,500."

"Christmas is a great time for caring, sharing, and loving each other," she said. "We just had a most recent wish granted. We had an interview for a young girl and her wish was to go to Magic Kingdom at Disney World. So she will be going there next year."

Make-a-Wish also makes sure to remain caring to Wish Kids even after having their wishes granted. Wish Kids are

invited to the foundation for them to know that they are still being cared for.

"They are not just given a wish and then forgotten about. We invite them to different events because we want to know how they are doing, make sure they are doing okay. And we just support them. We support the families," Quinn added.

All the monetary donations that Make-a-Wish gets for Guam and CNMI (one region) remain local, and does not go to the U.S. mainland or anywhere else.

To make a wish come true, donate online on <http://guam.wish.org>, write a check to "Make a Wish Foundation", or call (670) 483-WISH. (Iva Maurin)

Ex-Saipan resident pens book

Dan Shore, a long-time Saipan resident, has just published his first book, *whats the point...*

Shor lived on Saipan from 2003-2007 and taught filmmaking at the Northern Marianas College. He wrote and directed videos for the Visitors' Channel, public service announcements, and the night time soap opera *State of Liberty*.

whats the point... is an illustrated coffee table rhyme book created expressly for children and adults. It is illustrated by noted filmmaker Judy Spier, along with LeFan Tu. It can be ordered for holiday gifts at <https://www.xlibris.com/en/bookdetails/803285-whats-the-point>. According to a press release, the book is dedicated

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Homeless prevention coalition meeting

The CNMI Homeless Prevention Coalition will be having its general membership meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019, starting at 10am, at the Division of Youth Services conference room in Chalan Piao (next to the Bank of Guam). For more information, contact Gennie Bliss at (670) 237-1000 or Jacob Muña at (670) 234-6866/9447. (PR)

Kagman schools set PTSA meeting today

The Kagman Unified Schools will be having a Parents Teachers Students Association meeting today, Dec. 10, 2019, at 5:30pm in the Chacha Ocean View Middle School cafeteria. Child care will be provided. Call the any of the three schools at 237-3150 (KAGE), 237-3165 (COVMS), or 237-3196 (KHS) if you have any questions or concerns. (PR)

US military trainings

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. Navy will conduct helicopter training in Dandan-Malojloj from 11am to 11:55pm on Dec. 10, 11, and 12.

The U.S. Navy will also conduct search and rescue training in Outer Apra Harbor from 11am to 11:55pm today, Dec. 10.

The public and marine operators are advised to remain alert of military personnel who will be swimming in the water as part of the training event.

Naval special warfare units will conduct anti-terrorism training in Radio Barrigada from 11am to 5pm on Dec. 11.

Training ammunition will be used during this training. Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the trainings.

Helicopter Sea-Combat Squadron 25 will conduct embassy reinforcement training in Radio Barrigada from 6pm to 11pm on Dec. 11.

During these trainings, blanks will be used. Residents in surrounding areas again should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the trainings.

The U.S. Coast Guard will conduct live fire training in open ocean from 9:30am to 11am on Dec. 11.

All vessels are advised to keep clear of a five nautical mile radius of these coordinates: 13°29'N/144°25'E.

These types of trainings are designed to enhance the readiness of military personnel. Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the training.

It is recommended the public, fishermen, and marine tour operators monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories. (PR)

Free Guam workshops

The Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center is offering free workshops to the public this December that will teach participants how to market and sell your products/services to the federal government.

Workshops run from 9am to 10am at the University of Guam in the Jesus and Eugenia Leon Guerrero Business and Public Admin Building, Margarita Perez & Jaime Tuquero IT&E Lecture Hall, Room 131(unless otherwise specified):

■ Dec. 12: Responding to Requests for Proposals—The Guam PTAC will walk participants through the common sections and clauses of an RFP as well as provide tips on developing a proposal in response to an RFP.

■ Dec. 19: Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment—Do you have a DOD contract and need to get paid? The Guam PTAC will explain DOD invoicing procedures using the Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment system, formerly known as WAWF.

For Project Management Professionals, Guam PTAC workshops may count toward your annual Professional Development Unit goals.

Register at <http://guamptac.com/news-and-events.php>, or call/email Therese at 735-2552/admin@guamptac.com.

Walk-ins are welcome. (PR)



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IT&E

PUBLIC NOTICE

The U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) is considering a request for Federal assistance from Northern Marianas College (NMC) to construct a Workforce Development & Training Center in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), EDA is conducting an assessment of the potential of the proposed project to affect the environment and/or historic properties.

The project involves the construction of the three-story Workforce Development & Training Center. The proposed facility will house NMC's Center for Training and Innovation which provides non-degree training programs and facilitates collaborative partner programs with other agencies and universities. NMC's Nursing Program and Business Program will also be housed in the building. The proposed project aims to replace offices, classrooms, and laboratories permanently damaged as a result of the devastation of Super Typhoon Yutu in October 2018.

The project area will be located on the main NMC campus on the island of Saipan. The NMC property is comprised of 742,259 square feet and a perimeter of 3,615 feet. The proposed project site is located on the north-east corner of the property and will cover roughly 8,500 square feet. The proposed project site will be located entirely within the existing campus boundary. Project information is available for review at NMC's Community Development Institute (CDI) located in Building P.

If you have any information regarding potential impacts to environmental resources or historic properties associated with this proposed project, please provide it in writing to:

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
Attn: Regional Environmental Officer
915 Second Avenue, Room 1890
Seattle, Washington 98174-1012
E-mail: RDefato@eda.gov

Comments received in the EDA Seattle Regional Office by 5:00 p.m. (Pacific Time) on December 26, 2019 will be considered. A copy of the NEPA/NHPA decisional document will be available upon request at the above EDA Regional Office.

TSL Foundation is named CNMI Scholarship Provider of the Year



Tan Siu Lin Foundation administrative officer Mel Naputi, center, receives the CNMI Scholarship Provider of the Year award from CNMI Scholarship Office administrator Rose Pangelinan Camacho, left, and financial aid representative Coryn Achas at the CNMI Scholarship Fair held last Nov. 30 at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

IVA MAURIN

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Tan Siu Lin Foundation, the charitable arm of TanHoldings, is the inaugural awardee of the very first CNMI Scholarship Provider of the Year plumb.

The award, which is intended to become an annual honor, was presented by the CNMI Scholarship Office at the Scholarship Fair last Nov. 30 at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center, to celebrate the power of scholarship and the people behind them.

"We are pleased to work with the CNMI government and our educational institutions in providing assistance to students, who aspire to im-

prove themselves and prepare for their future through their continued education," said TSL Foundation executive director Merlie Tolentino.

The TSL Foundation believes that students who are given opportunities to receive education and training are not only helping themselves and their families but also the community.

"We would also like to commend the NMC Scholarship Office for doing its best to help as many students as it can," Tolentino said. "The TSL Foundation acknowledges that the NMI Scholarship Office faces challenges in getting resources for its program, but it continues to persevere in these trying times and reach

out to deserving students."

At the Scholarship Fair, CSO administrator Rose Pangelinan Camacho also recognized all the scholarship providers in the CNMI, including Bank of Guam, Saipan Chamber of Commerce, Joeten Enterprises, First Hawaiian Bank, Matson Navigation Co., Northern Marianas Insurance Association, Office of the Mayor of Rota, Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance Program, and the Office of the Mayor of Tinian and Aguigan Islands.

"We want to recognize all the scholarship providers in the CNMI," Camacho said. "They have made a positive impact on lives, in our community, through their financial support and contributions and their continued support in helping our students obtain their educational goals."

Education in the CNMI is made more accessible through the help of scholarship providers. Every year, the CSO provides avenues for these resources to be made available to students on the island.

For its part, the TSL Foundation has helped more than 100 students and remains committed to helping CNMI students in the years to come.

"Keep up your strong work and never stop learning," Tolentino said. "The Tan Siu Lin Foundation, your family, and our very giving community will always find ways to help you realize your goals. It is our hope that, once you complete your study, you will give back to our beloved Commonwealth and inspire other students to work on achieving their dreams, too."

For more information about scholarships, contact CSO at (670) 664-4750 or visit www.cnmischolarship.net.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



EMERGENCY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CUC-RFP-20-004

FINANCIAL AND COMPLIANCE AUDIT FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019, 2020 & 2021

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals for services of a U.S. Certified Public Accounting Firm/Individual with knowledge, skill, and experience in auditing (1) financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and auditing standards of the U.S. and; (2) federal awards programs in accordance with the Single Audit Act and U.S. Office of Management and Budget requisites

- Provide assistance to the CUC management with the preparation of the annual financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America
- Ensure that the financial statements and auditor's reports also meet any specific requirements contained in agreements or other contractual requirements relative to financial statement presentation and the audits.
- Submit the draft financial statements and accompanying auditor's reports to CUC management no later than January 31st of each year, and issue the final reports no later than February 28th of each year.
- Provide 15 bound copies of the final financial statements and accompanying auditor's report
- Provide an electronic copy (e.g., .pdf format) of the final report to the CUC.

Auditors are responsible to review the 2019, 2020 & 2021 financial statements to include the physical CUC assets for each fiscal year.

The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 for one RFP package set. The \$100 package fee will be waived for firms that had previously registered and paid for a CUC-RFP-19-037 package.

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies of the Proposal & One (1) original and five (5) hard copies of the Cost Proposal must be submitted in a separate sealed envelopes marked "CUC-RFP-20-004, Financial and Compliance Audit for Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2019, 2020 & 2021" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **December 23, 2019 at 10:00 AM (ChST)**. Late submissions and conditional RFP will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposer due to lack of information or understanding of the RFP requirements in the course of proposer's preparation of the RFP under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the RFP under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 10, 2019** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Greg Cruz, CUC Chief Financial Officer, via email address greg.cruz@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said RFP, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: <http://www.nmhc.gov.net>
Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/cnminmhc/>

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Acting Chairman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that the Regular Board Meeting is scheduled on **Friday, December 13, 2019 – 9:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Saipan**. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

- I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - c. Adoption of Agenda
 - d. Adoption of Minutes (May 28, 2019)
- II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
- III. CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
 - a. Divisional Update Reports
 - b. CDBG-DR Updates
- IV. OLD BUSINESS
 - a. Garapan Annex RFP
 - b. Personnel Policies and Procedures
 - c. Procurement Policies and Procedures
 - d. Telephone or Video Conferencing for Board Participation
- V. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. CDBG-DR Budget and Staffing
 - b. CDBG-DR Housing Policies and Procedures
 - c. HOME Program Homebuyer and Homeowner Policies and Procedures
 - d. Personnel matters
 - e. Auction Procedures
 - f. Lotus Homes Return and Reallocation of Credits
 - g. Isa Villas Request for Additional Credits
- VI. LEGAL COUNSEL'S PENDING/ONGOING REPORT
- VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
- VIII. OTHER MATTERS
- IX. ADJOURNMENT

(Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/ KIMO M. ROSARIO
Acting Chairman of the Board

"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"

CHCC begins move toward new system of recording vital records

By **MARC A. VENUS**
marc_venus@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Health Care Corp. will soon start the process of implementing a new system for recording vital records information by moving away from paper records and having the information recorded digitally.

This project is tentatively expected to be completed in 2020.

The Electronic Vital Registration System will be implemented at the Commonwealth Health Center through Axiell ALM Inc., a software vendor and consultant that specializes in software for registries and vital records and has implemented software solutions and vital records registries throughout the Pacific, Australasia, Caribbean, Canada, and the United States.

This shift to digital records-keeping will enable CHCC to keep up with efforts to modernize health information technologies. Over the next several months, Axiell will work with CHCC in creating a system for

the electronic administration of vital statistics, including birth, death, and fetal death registries in the CNMI.

Decreasing reliance on paper forms will allow the CNMI to comply with all federally regulated standards under the National Center for Health Statistics, and improve the quality of data collection within CHCC's jurisdiction.

When the new EVRS is fully in place, it will give CHCC the ability to transmit birth and death data to the NCHS, greatly improved reporting timeliness and quality of vital events information collected, increased security fraud and protection, allow the CNMI to participate in the exchange of information through the Electronic Verification of Vital Events with state and federal agencies, an increased ability to interface with other CHCC data systems, and continual compliance with NCHS and the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems programs and requirements.

Benavente encourages students to pursue scholarship opportunities

With the CNMI not having enough people to fill all job positions in the labor market, the CNMI Department of Labor hopes that many of the students who are awarded scholarship grants by the CNMI Scholarship Office to pursue their studies off island would return to the Marianas after graduation and fill the gap in the islands' labor pool.

"That is where our challenges are. There's not that many adults that have the specialized skills to fill those job vacancies," said Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente during last Saturday's CSO's Scholarship Fair at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

This is also why the Labor Department has partnered with the CNMI Scholarship Office, Benavente said, with the hope that many CNMI scholars would come back to the Marianas after graduation.

Benavente pointed out that the CNMI Department of Labor has a website, www.marianaslabor.net, where job vacancies are announced every day, by CNMI employers looking for people with basic or specialized skills.

"Many of these job openings are in vocations such as general maintenance, culinary, sales, and management, and we have such a small labor pool," said Benavente.

In the Labor Department's 2019 Citizen Centric Report, it was revealed that most of the more than 36,000 job openings in the CNMI in fiscal year

2019 will remain unfilled because of its small workforce-ready population.

Last Saturday, the Labor Department participated in CSO's Scholarship Fair to meet with and encourage students to further their education.

"We are trying to encourage them to look beyond high school and college, look beyond for their future. Get a really good job or open their own businesses, to create that entrepreneurial spirit within their minds, while they are young," Benavente added.

The Labor secretary is confident that by putting the information in front of the students, they can make wise decisions as to learning skills right out of high school, and going on to college.

"[I] encourage them to further their education, go to college," Benavente said. "It is one of the best things you can do for your life. Lifelong learning is a gift and they should take advantage of the opportunities from the CNMI Scholarship Office."

"There aren't too many places in the world that offer scholarships. Here we are, in this tiny CNMI, we have scholarships available for students. If they want it, go for it, further better their lives for them, and their children, and so forth."

For more information about scholarships, contact CSO at (670) 664-4750 or visit www.cnmischolarship.net. (Iva Maurin)

Kilili: Medicaid funding increase bill still under review

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A federal legislation that would boost Medicaid funding for the CNMI is still under review, according to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), who told *Saipan Tribune* in a statement that the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate are still working on the language of H.R. 2328, the Reauthorize and Extend the America's Community Health Act, or REACH Act.

"At present, the [U.S.] House is working with the [U.S.] Senate Finance Com-

mittee on bill language that will be acceptable to the Senate," Sablan said. "I believe the REACH Act will be brought to the House floor for a vote, when the compromise language has been agreed."

The REACH Act raises the annual block grant for the Northern Marianas from \$6.95 million to \$60 million and results in a Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage reportedly "comparable" to the U.S. state with the lowest per-capita income.

CNMI Medicaid got \$36 million additional funding through H.R. 2157, or the Additional

Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2019, which was enacted in early June 2019. Yet just three months later, \$31 million of that amount had already been used up, according to a previous statement from Gov. Ralph DLG Torres.

H.R. 2328 is being looked at as a great way to boost Medicaid funding for the CNMI. Sablan said as much. "This bill is particularly important to the Marianas. It significantly increases our Medicaid funding over a multi-year period. It also frees us from the formula for allocating Medicaid among the insular areas that

has put the Marianas at a disadvantage for decades."

"I have worked long and hard on the Medicaid issue and the REACH Act offers our best opportunity ever to improve the program for the Marianas," he added.

Also included in the REACH Act is language that secures multi-year funding for community health centers, such as the Kagman Community Health Center and the Tinian Community Health Center.

The legislation already left the U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce in July 2019.



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Young fishermen assured of govt's support



IVA MAURIN

Members of the Saipan Fishermen Association's Youth Fishing Club had a surprise visit from Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios last Saturday on Capital Hill. Both officials came to express support and appreciation for their interest in fishing. These young fishermen have been attending an eight-month program where they are learning the rudiments of fishing.

The CNMI's new generation of fishermen were recently assured of full government support, with no less than Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios both promising to provide whatever they can to be of help.

Torres and Palacios surprised the young fishermen with a visit last Saturday at the Head Start center on Capital Hill, where they have been spending their Saturdays to learn the rudiments of fishing.

Both expressed appreciation

and support for the students' interest in learning how to fish.

"We are very blessed for what we have here in our islands," Torres said. "Our waters are just right there. People around the world travel to other places just to go fishing, to

try that blue lagoon like what we have, and we live here. This is our treasure."

"We have our water out there. Mother Nature is growing, raising, reproducing our fish. All you got to do is make sure that's part of you, that you

love it out there, that you love to fish," he added.

Torres said he himself loves to fish and that he teaches his children how to fish. "One day, if not already, you will bring fish to your family. In due time, you'll be providing for yourself, your friends, for the party."

The governor also reminded the members of the Saipan Fishermen's Association's Youth Fishing Club that the most important thing about fishing is respecting, protecting, and appreciating the environment.

Torres shared that he, along with Palacios, attended the International Conference on Tuna in Hawaii about a year and a half ago, where they saw an opportunity for the CNMI fishing grounds. From there, they decided to help the islands' fishing industry.

"There's a lot of younger folks that are very interested in fishery resources, whether it's for harvesting, marketing, [or] conservation issues," Palacios said. "[SFA] already has a module for training, focused on high schools, and even

younger ones, and the governor and I are very happy that they already got it. All we got to do is show our support and provide whatever help we can to facilitate the success of this program."

SFA's youth fishing program runs for eight months, and is intended to give young members of the community an understanding of ocean preservation and the fishery industry in the CNMI.

SFA president Gene Weaver expressed appreciation to Torres and Palacios for their support and also acknowledged the lieutenant governor for being among the first members of the fishing association.

"We are passing on knowledge, from all the presenters, from all experts to you. We are just passing the knowledge down from generation to generation," Weaver said, addressing the members of SFA Youth Fishing Club.

For more information and/or to support the Youth Fishing Club, contact SFA at <https://www.facebook.com/sfacnmi/>. (Iva Maurin)

USCIS employs H-1B electronic registration for FY 2021 season

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has completed a successful pilot testing phase and is implementing the registration process in the next H-1B lottery.

Employers seeking to file H-1B cap-subject petitions for the fiscal year 2021 cap, including those eligible for the advanced degree exemption, must first electronically register and pay the associated \$10 H-1B registration fee.

The electronic registration process will streamline processing by reducing paperwork and data exchange, and will provide an overall cost savings to petitioning employers.

Under this new process, employers seeking H-1B workers

subject to the cap, or their authorized representatives, will complete a registration process that requires only basic information about their company and each requested worker. USCIS will open an initial registration period from March 1 through March 20, 2020. The H-1B random selection process, if needed, will then be run on those electronic registrations. Only those with selected registrations will be eligible to file H-1B cap-subject petitions.

Historically, employers filed their full, and often voluminous, H-1B cap-subject petitions with USCIS, after which USCIS would select eligible petitions through a random selection process. This process resulted in unnecessary paperwork and

incurred mailing costs for both petitioners and the agency.

USCIS will post step-by-step instructions informing registrants how to complete the registration process on its website along with key dates and timelines as the initial registration period nears. USCIS will also conduct public engagements and other outreach activities to ensure registrants and interested parties are familiar with the new registration system. The agency may determine it is necessary to continue accepting registrations, or open an additional registration period, if it does not receive enough registrations and subsequent petitions projected to reach the numerical allocations.

DHS formally created the H-1B registration requirement in the final rule, Registration Requirement for Petitioners Seeking To File H-1B Petitions on Behalf of Cap-Subject Aliens, published on Jan. 31, and effective on April 1, 2019. DHS intends to publish a notice in the Federal Register in the coming weeks to formally announce implementation of the H-1B registration system and provide additional details on the process.

On Nov. 8, 2019, DHS published a final rule establishing a \$10 H-1B registration fee. The registration fee final rule is effective on Dec. 9, 2019, and will apply to registrations submitted during the initial and future registration periods. (USCIS)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

December 10, 1998

Tan Holdings invests in youth

"Months ago, this was a proposal. Today it becomes a reality," said Carmen M. Indalecio, junior student of Marianas High School, as the CD-Rom Tower was unveiled at the Joeten Kiyu Library. Indalecio, who worked at the library last summer, saw the need for this institution to join the information highway. She took part in articulating this dream to sell it for possible donors. A reliable partner took the challenge and provided funding to match the federal money in expanding the library's current technology resources. Yesterday, Indalecio and Tan Holdings Corp. witnessed the realization of the dream.

Boy gets 3 years for murder

A 14-year-old boy who pleaded guilty to the killing of another teenager eight months ago in a gang initiation rite was sentenced yesterday to three years imprisonment in a juvenile detention. The boy pleaded guilty to first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder in the stabbing death of Antonio Sablan Jr. on April 30. Superior Court Associate Judge John Manglona ordered him to serve three years in a juvenile detention. The boy is the second of three suspects who have pleaded guilty to the killing. The remaining suspect is sched-

uled for trial next month.

December 10, 1999

BOE OKs 2 new high school for Saipan

The Board of Education yesterday approved a plan to build two new high schools early next year to ease overcrowding at the Marianas High School and Hopwood Junior High School. According to Anthony Pellegrino, BOE member and chair of the CIP Committee, the total budget for the project is \$19. The amount will also cover expenses for the construction of one junior high school. Based on a plan submitted by the committee to the board, the schools will be located in Kagman and Koblerville. Each school can accommodate 600 students, a capacity which officials said is enough to address the projected 3 percent annual growth in student population on Saipan for the next 10 years.

Garapan Street Market opens

Cooperation and collaboration between the private and public sector was the key to the success of the Garapan Street Market's grand opening last night at Saipan's main tourist district. Hundreds of residents and visitors flocked to the 3rd and 4th Streets of Garapan to take part in the inaugural, which blends local food, live music and cultural performances. Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio lauded organizers for their hard work in making the event a reality. He said the idea first came up at the Governor's Economic Revitalization Task Force and was inspired by the success of the Taste of the Marianas held earlier this year. At least seven government agencies teamed up with the private sector to make the event a success. "By working together, this

project has succeeded," the governor said.

December 10, 2004

Chinese media checks out the NMI

Several media representatives from China recently visited the CNMI to check out the destination in anticipation of the Approved Destination Status being signed this month between the Commonwealth and Beijing. The Marianas Visitors Authority said the Beijing and Shanghai media visited the Northern Marianas—Saipan, Tinian, and Rota—from Nov. 30 through Dec. 4, 2004, on a familiarization tour of the islands. The FAM group consisted of seven media outlets from Beijing and Shanghai and one MVA Shanghai representative. During their visit, they conducted site inspections at hotels, spas, and marine activities on all three islands. The media coverage will feature the islands' scenic attraction, spa, and marine activities.

SBS targets family market in Korea

The Seoul Broadcasting System has chosen the Marianas once again for their upcoming special segment on the popular Korean talk show, Good Morning with Mr. Kim Seung Hyun and Ms. Jeong Eun Ah. The production crew was on Saipan from Nov. 28 through Dec. 1, 2004. The Saipan feature is a special segment focused on one of Korea's famous talents, Ms. Park Eun Hye and her family's recent vacation with her family in Saipan, in turn marketing the Marianas as the destination of choice for the family market in Korea. SBS' Morning Talk Show is very popular among Korean housewives, age 30 – 40.



Students that participated in the 2019 Saipan Chamber of Commerce Career Exploration Day have their picture taken after getting their certificates of participation during the Chamber's membership meeting last Dec. 4, 2019, at the Saipan World Resort's Royal Taga Hall. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**

70 students join Chamber's Career Exploration Day

The Education and Workforce, or EdWork, Committee of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce executed a successful Career Exploration Day last Dec. 4, with 70 students exposed to the different career professions in the Commonwealth.

The students—juniors and seniors from seven private and public schools—were matched with 31 Chamber-member companies and agencies for a day of mentorship and career exploration for the community's future leaders.

Students shadowed executives, managers, and employees from assigned Chamber-member companies and agencies for the first half of the morning. All students and company representatives then met for lunch at the Saipan World Resort for the Chamber's general membership meeting, where Northern Marianas Technical Institute CEO Agnes McPhetres and Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente shared

their insights about choosing career paths that are both personally fulfilling and contribute to the CNMI economy.

The investment in the student leaders continued after the general membership meeting, with Chamber-member volunteers sharing their time and expertise for personal and professional development in 30-minute workshop sessions:

■ Tyrell Pauling, Hyatt Regency Saipan Food and Beverage director, focused his presentation on his journey post-high school, where he chose a path fueled by his passion for cooking. He talked about the importance of trades, especially in the region.

■ Dave Guerrero, assistant vice president of First Hawaiian Bank, focused on the importance of financial literacy at an early age. He shared some savings tips and other eye-opening conversations promoting good saving and banking practices.

■ Polly Deleon Guerrero



Masga, Human Resource manager at the Northern Marianas College, shared some tips about interviewing skills for students looking to go straight into the workforce.

■ Johnathan Aguon, Da'ok Academy principal and co-owner of Edvance Pacific, inspired students with his presentation on the power of positive thinking and growth-oriented mindsets.

"Business engagement is a critical factor in addressing

the workforce needs of our CNMI," said Chamber EdWork Committee chair Nicole Babauta. "The SCC Education and Workforce Development Committee would like to thank its members for imparting their business leadership, investment and engagement to help move our workforce forward."

The participating schools were Da'ok Academy, Grace Christian Academy, Kagman High School, Marianas High School, Mount Carmel

School, Saipan International School, and Saipan Southern High School.

The Chamber also celebrates its members who gave their time and energy to help mentor these future leaders: American Red Cross-NMI Chapter, Angil Design, Aon Insurance, Bank of Saipan, BankPacific, Budget Car Rental, D&R Visuals, Department of Labor, DFS Saipan, Docomo Pacific, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, First Hawaiian Bank, GHD,

Hyatt Regency Saipan, IT&E, JZ Group, Kanoa Resort, Marianas Pacific Distributors, Inc., Marianas Visitor's Authority, MP Holdings- Saipan Vegas, N15 Architects, No Ka Oi, Northern Marianas Humanities Council, NMTI, Pacific Islands Club Saipan, Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc., Paradise Dental Spa, Rebelli, Saipan Seventh Day Adventist Clinic, Saipan Seventh Day Adventist School, and Triple J Saipan. **(PR)**



Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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EDITORIAL

There's blood in your guacamole

Let's now consider the winter avocado, once unknown in Southern California supermarkets but ubiquitous these days, thanks to our insatiable hunger for buttery golden-green flesh.

Although native to tropical Mexico and Central America, avocados became LA's symbolic gift to the world after a man named Rudolph Hass sprouted a round pit in his La Habra Heights grove and some years later discovered the result: a fruit with odd black skin that was tough enough to handle shipping and storage. Until then (the mid-1920s), avocados had been for backyard hobbyists and entrepreneurs who experimented with many varieties of the exotic fruit, generally thin-skinned and green, which came ripe at various times of the year. But the Hass avocado caught on like no other. It now accounts for about 95% of California's avocado exports.

And now a good chunk of our imports as well, especially between August and April. Hass avocados don't ripen in the winter here, at least not in supermarket numbers. But they do in their native Mexico. That meant nothing in an era of high import tariffs, but after the North American Free Trade Agreement took effect in 1994 and an import ban based on fear of pests was lifted in 1997, Mexican Hass (or Hass-type) avocados filled produce bins. They are tasty and the cost is low.

Or is it? Violent drug cartels that terrorize innocent Mexicans have extended their reach over legal crops such as avocados. In a Nov. 21 story, *The Times'* Kate Linticum reported on the diversification of Mexico's criminal gangs into avocado production and sales. Cartels have long demanded protection payments. Now, as Linticum reports, they have begun logging protected hillsides and woodlands to plant their own groves and horn in on the lucrative avocado business. Rival gangs target each other in deadly shoot-outs as gruesome and as terrorizing as any drug violence.

They are fueled by U.S. avocado hunger.

It was once the case that individual Americans could hold themselves aloof from the consequences of their nation's appetites by simply saying "no" to things that were illegal—to marijuana, cocaine and other illicit (or once-illicit) substances that flood across the border. But now, even avocados? Must murder and extortion be the price of New Year's morning avocado toast or fresh Super Bowl guacamole?

Surely there must be a way to sever the link.

Should we eat guacamole made from squash and cooking oil?

Maybe a person could boycott Mexican-grown avocados and feel a bit virtuous. But that does little to lessen the continuing trade or its consequences. And even if we all joined the boycott, would we be doing anything other than driving the last nail into the coffin of the growers struggling against the cartels?

We could grow more of our own, including winter varieties that look and taste like the Hass.

There is no consequence-free choice. Responsible consumption requires knowing the true costs (social and environmental, as well as economic) of the food we eat. A perfect avocado may be bliss, but ignorance never is.

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Basic Decency Test



George Zimmerman followed and killed the unarmed teenager Trayvon Martin, then auctioned off the gun and sold Confederate flag artwork. Now, citing emotional distress he's "suffered" since the trial, Zimmerman is suing Trayvon Martin's family for \$100 million.

This is (check one):

A: Appropriate ☐

B: Disgusting ☐

How the US could help the Iranian people

Once again Iranians have flooded their country's streets to participate in widespread protests sparked by gasoline price hikes, only to be met by a brutal crackdown. But clearly the unrest was about more than the price of gas, reflecting deeper frustration and anger over the general economic malaise caused by a corrupt, repressive government and punishing U.S. sanctions.

Beyond rhetorical support, there are a number of concrete steps the United States could take if concern for the Iranian people is a genuine priority, as it should be.

The Trump administration could lift its reinstatement of secondary sanctions against Iran that were imposed following its unilateral withdrawal in 2018 from the Iran nuclear agreement. The administration's "maximum pressure" campaign of unprecedented economic sanctions against Iran has hurt the Iranian people more than the Iranian leadership.

The pressure is contributing to soaring inflation and unemployment in Iran. The devaluing of the Iranian currency is eroding the savings of average Iranians and leading to prohibitively high living costs. The sanctions are also having serious humanitarian consequences. Human rights reports suggest that, despite exemptions for humanitarian imports, the banking restrictions caused by U.S. sanctions are preventing Iran from financing such imports, leading to shortages of drugs to treat rare diseases and multiple forms of cancer.

The U.S. could change course and allow the rest of the world to conduct commercial and financial transactions with Iran. Easing up on secondary sanctions against close American allies in Europe and Asia could also create a more supportive international environment for stepping up pressure should Iran further renege on its nuclear commitments, particularly since Iran would have no justification for doing so if it continued to receive the economic benefits promised in the original agreement.

While some in the Trump administration may still be hoping that enough economic pressure will lead to the collapse of the regime, trying a different approach may improve the prospects for a new negotiation process with Iran, which Trump has at times appeared to support.

The administration also could lift the travel ban on Iranians who wish to come to the United States. The ban has proved to be one of the most destructive policies harming average Iranians, many of whom have been unable to see family members or seek medical care in the United States because of the restrictions. The ban has also reduced the ability of Iranian students to seek an education in the U.S., exactly the type of next-generation Iranians who could help foster a more positive U.S.-Iranian relationship

By **DALIA DASSA KAYE**
Los Angeles Times

Dalia Dassa Kaye is a senior political scientist and director of the Center for Middle East Public Policy at Rand Corp.



in the future. While the travel ban is supposed to exempt Iranians seeking student and nonimmigrant visas, many such applicants have been blocked from entering the country.

In addition, the travel ban and related policies have begun to chip away at traditionally positive views of the United States, with recent polling showing that 86% of Iranians now view the U.S. unfavorably. If helping the Iranian people is a key objective, lifting the travel ban would be one of the most important steps this administration could take—for both humanitarian and interest-based reasons.

Finally, in an attempt to close off Iranians from communications inside and outside the country, the Iranian government shut down the internet for five days after public protest began in mid-November, a drastic move meant to quell the protesters' ability to organize against the government. And yet the Iranian leadership maintained access to the internet during the shutdown. The United States imposed property-based sanctions on the Iranian information minister because of the shutdown, but in the absence of broader U.S. support for Iranians, the step is likely to be seen as a mere gesture that will not fundamentally alter Iranians' access to the outside world.

The State Department's attempts to encourage unhindered Iranian access to the internet, including supporting efforts of Iranian citizens to circumvent these restrictions on access to information, is a move in the right direction, particularly if pursued in tandem with other measures to relieve pressure on the Iranian people.

Iranians are protesting for better governance that would make the welfare of the Iranian people a priority over the government's costly regional meddling and the enrichment of entrenched leaders. For this reason, Iranians deserve American support.

Instead, current U.S. policies are hurting the cause the Iranian people are fighting for while failing to achieve any strategic objectives. If the U.S. pursued policies aimed at creating a better future for the Iranian people, they may have the added benefit of producing less dangerous Iranian government policies than those we have seen under the mantra of maximum pressure.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

‘Medicare for All’ would be disastrous

For decades, the left has advocated for nationalizing the country’s health care system under a “Medicare for All”-type plan. Despite their rhetoric, however, this scheme would do much more harm than good.

As of this writing, dozens of Democrats in the House of Representatives and Senate have co-sponsored or voiced their support for one of the many iterations of Medicare for All. While M4A activists promise it would reduce health care costs and increase access, the exact opposite is likely to occur. In fact, there are several reasons the United States should avoid implementing Medicare for All.

First, M4A is completely unaffordable and would push the United States even further into the debt abyss. According to a study by the Mercatus Center, Medicare for All “would add approximately \$32.6 trillion to federal budget commitments during the first 10 years of its implementation (2022–2031).” The United States is already more than \$23 trillion in debt; adding an extra \$30 trillion in federal spending over the next decade would cause economic Armageddon.

To put this in perspective, The Atlantic notes, “The Urban Institute, a center-left think tank highly respected among Democrats, is projecting that a plan similar to what (Senator Elizabeth) Warren and Senator Bernie Sanders are pushing would require \$34 trillion in additional federal spending over its first decade in operation. That’s more than the federal government’s total cost over the coming decade for Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid combined, according to the most recent Congressional Budget Office projections.”

Put another way, Medicare for All would blow up the federal budget, which would cause all sorts of negative consequences. Huge deficits, massive tax hikes, high inflation and major cuts to domestic and foreign programs are all but inevitable if Medicare for All becomes law.

Second, M4A would reduce access to health care services and medications. Why? Because the above cost estimate from the Mercatus Center is on the low end of the spectrum and “assume(s) the legislation achieves its sponsors’ goals of dramatically reducing payments to health providers, in addition to substantially reducing drug prices and administrative costs.”

In other words, M4A would wreak havoc on supply and demand within the health care industry, which encompasses about one-seventh of U.S. gross domestic product. Arbitrarily slashing reimbursement rates for medical professionals will dramatically reduce health care services. The same principle applies to the availability of existing drugs and those in the developmental stages.

Third, M4A (with its inherent price controls) would almost assuredly lead to health care rationing. Basic economics (and common sense) suggest that if the government provides 330 million Americans with “free” health care without increasing health care supply, shortages and rationing would be inevitable. Don’t believe this can happen in America? Well, just take a peek at what has happened to our neighbor to the north, which implemented a single-payer health care system in 1984.

Thirty-five years after it enacted universal health care, Canada’s health care system is rife with excruciatingly long wait times, along with several other problems. In fact, medical wait times in Canada are so appalling that “1,040,791 patients who waited for medically necessary treatment last year each lost \$1,822 (on average) due to work time lost,” according to the Canada-based Fraser Institute.

In far too many cases, Canadians are forced to wait months on end to receive care. The Fraser Institute notes the average wait time for patients who require “medically necessary elective orthopedic surgery” is an astounding 41.7 weeks.

Similar horror stories are common in countries with M4A-esque programs. For example, Great Britain’s National Health Service, created in 1948, is in shambles. As *Forbes* recently reported, “Nearly a quarter of a million British patients have been waiting more than six months to receive planned medical treatment from the National Health Service, according to a recent report from the Royal College of Surgeons. More than 36,000 have been in treatment queues for nine months or more.”

Fourth, M4A means major tax increases for all Americans. According to a recent report from the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, M4A “needs to be financed through higher taxes, lower spending, more borrowing, or some combination of the three.”

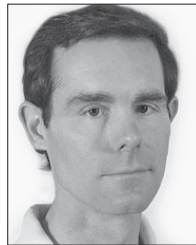
The report’s authors “estimate the cost could be covered with a 32% payroll tax, a 25% income surtax, a 42% value-added tax, or a public premium averaging \$7,500 per capita.”

While M4A advocates tout it will reduce costs for lower- and middle-income Americans, the exact opposite appears to be true.

Most Americans agree that the U.S. health care system needs major reforms. Increasing the government’s role in health care via Medicaid for All is not the answer, however. Just think, if the U.S. government can’t competently run the Postal Service, VA hospital system, DMVs or Amtrak, why would we task it with overseeing the extremely complicated and deeply personal health care system?

By **CHRIS TALGO**
InsideSources.com

Chris Talgo is an editor at The Heartland Institute. He wrote this for InsideSources.com.



America’s current health care system is a national disgrace

By almost every relevant metric, we do the worst or nearly the worst among all rich countries. We are the only country to permit tens of millions to go uninsured, far more people in the United States report skipping care because of cost issues than other countries, our infant mortality rate is atrocious and our life expectancy trails other nations and is actually dropping.

There’s no excuse for any of this in such a rich nation. We can solve all of these problems—by expanding coverage, eliminating underinsurance and co-pays and improving health care and health outcomes—with “Medicare for All.”

Medicare for All would cover everyone, and end the outrage of a system that permits 27 million Americans to go uninsured.

Medicare for All would solve the problem of underinsurance, which affects three in 10 adults. It would eliminate high deductibles that lead many to skip care.

And here’s the most overlooked fact about Medicare for All: It would improve coverage not just for the uninsured or underinsured, but for everyone, even those with the best health insurance plans now available. Medicare for All would eliminate co-pays and deductibles, provide for dental and vision care, and cover long-term care, including care in homes and nursing homes. With Medicare for All, every doctor would be “in network,” and you could use a doctor of your choice. That’s far better even than existing “Cadillac” plans.

Can we afford a system that would improve care for every single person?

Yes.

We can expand and improve Medicare at no additional cost compared to what we currently spend.

Leaving aside the very significant economic benefits—not just human health, but economic gains—that will come from improving the national health system, we can eliminate upward of **PRO** \$500 billion annually in spending wasted on bureaucracy, inefficiency and excessive corporate profits.

Thanks to price-gouging exploitation of patent monopolies and other government-granted market exclusivities, the United States spends outrageous sums on prescription drugs. By negotiating

drug prices and ending Big Pharma rip-offs and price gouging by middlemen, we could conservatively save \$200 billion every year.

Even bigger savings would come from eliminating the wasteful spending by the health care sector on administrative costs. The key would be to move away from per-treatment billing and instead rely on global budgets. Hospitals and other medical providers would receive an overall payment based on the patients they serve and the treatments they provide, and then they could get on with the business of providing care. The arrangement would be no different than the ways police stations or public libraries are funded; libraries don’t send a bill to the city treasurer each time a person checks out a book. The potential available savings are tremendous:

Administrative costs consume an astounding 25% of U.S. hospital spending, far above most comparable countries, due largely to the costs of billing. If hospital administrative spending were brought in line with more efficient countries, the United States could save more than \$150 billion each year on hospital spending alone.

Researchers have found that American medical practices spent almost four times more money than Canadian doctors on dealing with payment issues—\$82,000 per physician annually compared to \$20,000.

Processing bills, coupled with expenses for collection of unpaid bills, accounts for half or more of medical practice’s administrative costs—between 50% and 60%, according to a 2005 study published in *Health Affairs*.

A Medicare for All system would also be able to rationalize spending on expensive renovations and health care technology. By requiring separate budgets for the purchases of expensive medical equipment and other expansions, Medicare for All would ensure that such purchases are warranted by a community’s needs and would thus reduce unnecessary spending, both on the capital expenses themselves as well as on spending for related services.

Critics of Medicare for All have it wrong. They suggest that Medicare for All would bring rationing. But it’s the current system that imposes rationing as a shocking one in three Americans skip care because of costs. The critics say doctors or hospitals won’t be paid enough, ignoring that their costs will plummet because they won’t have to waste so much money on billing and administration. And they scream that quality of care will decline—even though the evidence is plain that, under the current system, we have the worst health indicators among rich countries, by far.

We absolutely can afford Medicare for All. What we can’t afford is to continue with our current failed system. The time is now for Medicare for All.






By **ROBERT WEISSMAN**
InsideSources.com

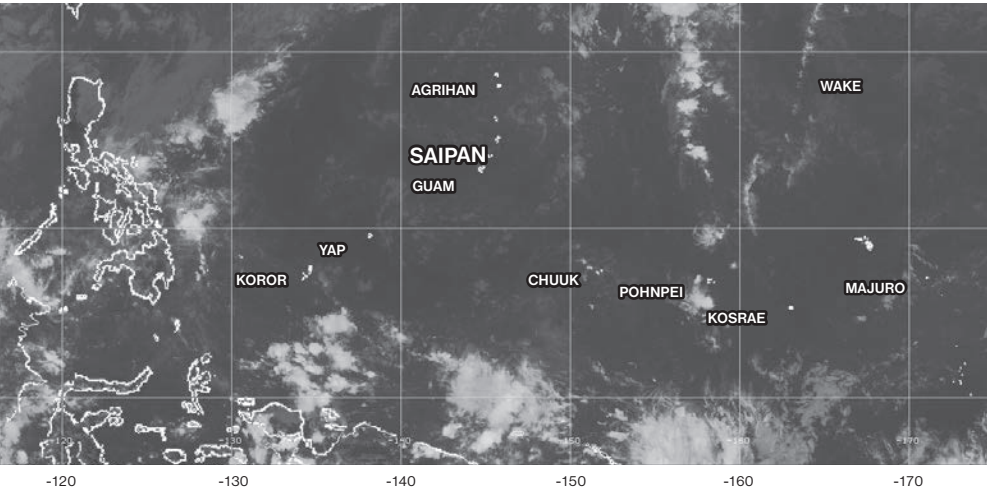
Robert Weissman is president of Public Citizen. He wrote this for InsideSources.com.



Q: Is “Medicare for All” something the United States should adopt?

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
									
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	
89°	77°	87°	76°	88°	77°	88°	77°	86°	76°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 8:26 AM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2019
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Light winds have arrived as the NWP models predicted. There should be a trend from northeast to southeast as a passing trough is the cause of these light winds. It could be difficult to detect though. Since there should be light winds and plenty of sunshine today, there is a possibility of island convection. On the 12Z sounding though, the precipitable water was only 1.41, a bit low for the deep tropics. According to the GFS20, if it increases at all, it will only be a little. So, left island convection out of the forecast, will have to watch as the morning unfolds, just in case; however the chance looks quite small, perhaps even vanishingly small. The upper-level low that looked like it might give us some thunderstorms has started moving north now rather than west, possibly being picked up and carried off by the strong flow ahead of the cold front located to our northwest. This should keep things fairly dry in the Marianas, so all the shower activity is isolated in the forecast. Truly now, dry season is well on the way. Wet season may not have conceded entirely yet, but it is on the way out.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°	
Palau	Partly Cloudy	85° / 77°	
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	
Pohnpei	Sunny	87° / 77°	
Kosrae	Mostly Sunny	85° / 77°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Sunny	73° / 61°	
Beijing	Sunny	46° / 27°	
Hong Kong	Sunny	72° / 61°	
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	85° / 73°	
London	Showers	55° / 39°	
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	67° / 51°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88° / 77°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	66° / 55°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	81° / 74°	
New York	Rain	62° / 34°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	61° / 50°	
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	45° / 41°	
Busan	Partly Cloudy	61° / 36°	
Rome	Showers	61° / 50°	
Salem	Rain	73° / 43°	
San Francisco	Cloudy	53° / 49°	
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	48° / 25°	
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	61° / 48°	
Washington, DC	Rain	61° / 34°	



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
12:26 AM	LOW TIDE	-0.12	
7:09 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.51	
12:20 PM	LOW TIDE	0.84	
5:48 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.71	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:31 AM	5:46 PM
Wednesday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM
Thursday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM
Friday	6:33 AM	5:48 PM
Saturday	6:34 AM	5:48 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	4:25 AM	4:17 PM
Wednesday	-	5:18 AM	5:02 PM
Thursday	-	6:14 AM	5:52 PM
Friday	-	7:11 AM	6:47 PM
Saturday	-	8:10 AM	7:45 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 2, 2019								
DEPARTURES					ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)					GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily		UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA105	6:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6		UA104	4:45pm	5:26pm	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)					NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY811	10:15am	3:00pm	Daily		SKY816	4:35pm	7:30pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
					SKY816	5:05pm	8:00pm	6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)					BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:20am	6:30am	Daily		7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
					7C3452	10:05pm	2:30am+1	3
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)					SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:05am	6:05am	Daily		OZ6233	8:00am	1:20pm	2, 4, 6
OZ626	2:10am	6:05am	1		OZ623	8:55am	2:30pm	1, 3, 5, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:25am	3, 7		7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 4, 5, 6		TW309	11:10am	4:25pm	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:35am	Daily		OZ625	7:30pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ6243	3:20pm	7:10pm	2, 4, 6		TW307	7:45pm	1:05am+1	Daily
OZ624	3:50pm	7:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7		OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily		7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
TW310	5:25pm	10:15pm	Daily					
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)					SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	4, 7		3U8647	10:30pm	4:30am+1	3, 6
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)					HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN			
JD396	7:30am	12:05pm	1		JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4		JD395	8:50pm	5:00am+1	7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)					BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
MU764	1:30am	6:00am	3, 5, 7		MU763	4:50pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)					MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:35am	1 via ICN		UA184/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:35am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN		OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	Daily via GUM		OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR		UA192/174	10:40pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
					UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
					OZ704/6233	11:45pm	1:20pm+1	1, 3, 5 via ICN
					OZ704/623	11:45pm	2:30pm+1	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)					HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN		OZ746/6233	12:35am	1:20pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN		OZ746/623	12:35am	2:30pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:40am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7		OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ6243/9661	3:20pm	11:15pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN		OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ624/9661	3:50pm	11:15pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN		UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
					UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, BC SkyMark ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily

1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

Less is more for *Free in Saipan*

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Marie Kondo's decluttering ways has crossed over to Saipan and one newly launched clothing line is taking it to heart.

Businesswoman Ashley Reiko Pangelinan launched Free In Saipan in June 2019 with an eye toward simplicity and functionality.

"We want to keep our designs simple. You know the saying 'less is more.' We love the quality of our clothing. Very soft and easy to wear in our climate," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

Like her Pualani Crown headdresses, Pangelinan said the inspiration behind Free In Saipan is the Northern Marianas' island way of life.

"Tourists coming here want to escape the stress and hurdles of their everyday city life. They want to enjoy what Saipan has to offer—the sun, the beach and the beautiful ocean—with their friends and family. We wanted to convey that feeling, that state of mind, through our brand," she said.

"We felt it was a great opportunity to start. We tested out our first black with white print T-shirts and the outcome was good. We had a lot of good feedback about the quality of our material," added Pangelinan.

Free In Saipan's first logo design were the waves inspired by the CNMI's beautiful ocean and it came in two colors: mint with sunshine yellow print and grey with pink print.

Before long, it wasn't just the tourists who were snapping up Free In Saipan merchandise.

"Our main target was the tourists visiting the island but we were so surprised at how many locals were supporting our clothing brand. I love the fact our community is so big in supporting local brands. I really want to thank them all for their love and support," she said.

The popularity of the new clothing line has resulted in more designs, the latest being a new Free In Saipan logo design with a kingfisher and the word Saipan forming what appears to be a tree.

Aside from T-shirts, Free In Saipan is also busting out new aqua tank tops with new logo designs.

All these are available at Free In Saipan's two locations on island: Boardline and Aqua Resort Club Gift Shop.

Pangelinan said the current wave of local residents prefer-



Saipan's newest clothing line, Free In Saipan, was launched in June 2019.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Owner Ashley Reiko Pangelinan said the inspiration behind Free In Saipan is the Northern Marianas' island way of life.

ring to wear local brands rather than buying more known brands abroad is encouraging for an entrepreneur like her and urges other people not to be afraid of going into business.

"Be motivated, creative, and passionate in what you're doing. And don't be afraid to take a risk because you're afraid to fail," she said.

Free In Saipan will be having a Christmas sale on Dec. 20 and 21 for last-minute Christmas shoppers at The Shack. The company will be teaming up with Hood CNMI (streetwear clothing brand) and SPN.dylus670 (spondylus jewelry) on that holiday sale.

For more information, contact hafadai@freeinsaipan.com or reach them on their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/freeinsaipan or on Instagram at @freeinsaipan.



Two models wear Free In Saipan T-shirts and Pualani Crown headdresses.

Jack in the Box welcomes Guam's residents to join team in Hawaii

GUAM—Jack in the Box Inc. (NASDAQ: JACK) has announced the opening of its paid management training program and invites interested Guam residents to apply for Restaurant Managers and Assistant Manager positions.

"We are looking for enthusiastic, experienced managers from Guam who are interested in relocating to support our operations in Hawaii," said Human Resources and Training director Vanessa Alcisto. "Our management

training program offers a very attractive salary and benefits package – a sign-on bonus, relocation allowance, housing assistance and full medical package to name a few. We believe in investing in our team. They will be the next generation of managers who can lead our restaurants for years to come."

Beginning February 2020, management trainees will undergo an eight-week program on Guam, which will include ServSafe food safety and First

» Paid management training program to develop next generation of leaders

Aid Certification training, to prepare them for the Hawaii program in May 2020.

"Jack in the Box offers opportunities for ongoing career development. We believe this is an exciting opportunity for Guam residents who are interested in relocating to fast-track

and develop their career with us," she added.

Management trainees will receive the following compensation and benefits:

- Paid training program offers a generous compensation salary package
- Relocation allowance and housing assistance
- Quarterly bonus opportunities
- Sign-on bonus
- Paid medical benefits (medical, dental, vision and prescription)

■ Life and Long Term Disability Insurance

■ Paid leave (vacation, sick leave, holidays)

■ 401k Retirement Savings Plan

■ Lifestyle benefits

■ Meal benefits

Interested applicants can call/text Vanessa Alcisto at (808) 347-2554 or send an email to hr@bluepacilc.com to request information or an application. Candidates must have at least three years management experience and must be able to start training in the Guam restaurant by February

2020 and relocate to Hawaii by May 2020. Phone screenings are taking place now and interviews scheduled for January 2020 on Guam.

Jack in the Box Inc. (NASDAQ: JACK), based in San Diego, is a restaurant company that operates and franchises Jack in the Box® restaurants, one of the nation's largest hamburger chains, with more than 2,200 restaurants in 21 states and Guam. For more information on Jack in the Box, including franchising opportunities, visit www.jackinthebox.com. (PR)

Nation

Watchdog expected to find Russia probe valid, despite flaws

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Justice Department's internal watchdog will release a highly anticipated report Monday that is expected to reject President Donald Trump's claims that the Russia investigation was illegitimate and tainted by political bias from FBI leaders. But it is also expected to document errors during the investigation that may animate Trump supporters.

The report, as described by people familiar with its findings, is expected to conclude there was an adequate basis for opening one of the most politically sensitive investigations in FBI history and one that Trump has denounced as a witch hunt. It began in secret during Trump's 2016 presidential run and was ultimately taken over by special counsel Robert Mueller.

The report comes as Trump faces an impeachment inquiry in Congress centered on his efforts to press Ukraine to investigate a political rival, Democrat Joe Biden — a probe the president also claims is politically biased.

Still, the release of Inspector General Michael Horowitz's review is unlikely to quell the partisan battles that have surrounded the Russia investigation for years. It's also not the last word: A separate internal investigation continues, overseen by Trump's attorney general, William Barr and led by a U.S. attorney, John Durham.

North Dakota county may become US' 1st to bar new refugees

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP)—Reuben Panchol was forced to leave war-torn Sudan decades ago as a child, embarking on an odyssey that eventually brought him to the American Midwest and left him eternally grateful to the country that took him in.

"I am an American citizen, a North Dakotan," said Panchol, a 38-year-old father of four. "And without North Dakota, I couldn't have made it."

Panchol hopes to share his story on Monday with members of a local commission who are set to vote on whether their county will stop accepting refugees. If they vote to bar refugees, as expected, Burleigh County—home to about 95,000 people and the capital city of Bismarck—could become the first local government to do so since President Donald Trump issued an executive order making it possible.

The county postponed a vote last week when more than 100 people showed up and overflowed the commission's normal meeting space.



In this June 19, 2018, file photo, Department of Justice Inspector General Michael Horowitz testifies before a joint House Committee on the Judiciary and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington.

That investigation is criminal in nature, and Republicans may look to it to uncover wrongdoing that the inspector general wasn't examining.

Trump tweeted Sunday: "I.G. report out tomorrow. That will be the big story!"

He previously has said that he was awaiting Horowitz's report but that Durham's report may be even more

important.

Horowitz's report is expected to identify errors and misjudgments by some law enforcement officials, including by an FBI lawyer suspected of altering a document related to the surveillance of a former Trump campaign aide. Those findings probably will fuel arguments by Trump and his supporters that the investiga-

tion was flawed from the start.

But the report will not endorse some of the president's theories on the investigation, including that it was a baseless

"witch hunt" or that he was targeted by an Obama administration Justice Department desperate to see Republican Trump lose to Democrat Hill-

ary Clinton in 2016.

It also is not expected to undo Mueller's findings or call into question his conclusion that Russia interfered in that election in order to benefit the Trump campaign and that Russians had repeated contacts with Trump associates.

Some of the findings were described to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity by people who were not authorized to discuss a draft of the report before its release. The AP has not viewed a copy of the document.

It is unclear how Barr, a strong defender of Trump, will respond to Horowitz's findings. He has told Congress that he believed "spying" on the Trump campaign did occur and has raised public questions about whether the counterintelligence investigation was done correctly.

The FBI opened its investigation in July 2016 after receiving information from an Australian diplomat that a Trump campaign adviser, George Papadopoulos, had been told before it was publicly known that Russia had dirt on the Clinton campaign in the form of thousands of stolen emails.

ACROSS THE NATION

4-year-old twins free selves, climb to safety after crash

SEATTLE (AP)—Washington state authorities say 4-year-old twins freed themselves from their car seats and climbed an embankment seeking help following a car crash that killed their father. KING-TV reported 47-year-old Corey Simmons of Langley died when the vehicle with his daughters in the backseat crashed on Whidbey Island around 6 p.m. Friday. Family members say the girls climbed about 200 feet (61 meters) up to the road after the accident 34 miles (55 kilometers) north of Seattle. Authorities say Simmons was not wearing a seatbelt when the car crashed into trees and went down the embankment. Police say the girls were transported to a hospital with minor injuries after an unidentified woman passing in her car went back to help and called 911. Authorities say the accident is under investigation.

District says it's not liable for boy, 8, who killed himself

CINCINNATI (AP)—The death of an 8-year-old boy whose parents say killed himself after he was bullied by

another student is at the center of a legal fight with his family and the Cincinnati Public Schools. School officials said the district isn't liable for the death of Gabriel Taye, pushing for the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals to overturn a federal trial judge's refusal to dismiss the parents' wrongful death lawsuit, The Cincinnati Enquirer reported. The boy's parents argue that Carson Elementary School never told them that Gabriel was knocked unconscious by another student during an altercation outside a school restroom on Jan. 24, 2017. School officials claim Gabriel told staff he had fainted and never said he had been bullied or assaulted. The district released a video that shows one boy bullying other students and then, according to the family's attorneys, pushing Gabriel into a wall when he tried to shake the boy's hand and knocking him unconscious. The spokeswoman said it's unclear from the video what happened to Gabriel at that moment. An assistant principal arrived about 4½ minutes after Gabriel fell to the floor, followed by other school employees and the school nurse, who helped him to his feet, according to surveillance video. He was on the

floor for about seven minutes.

Suspect's mother speaks out after Alabama officer slain

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (AP)—The mother of man charged with killing an Alabama police officer spoke said Sunday that she doesn't believe her son is capable of committing murder. LaJeromey Brown of Tennessee has been jailed on capital murder charges in the shooting of Huntsville police officer Billy Fred Clardy on Friday. Brown's mother, Alma Jean Applebet, told Al.com in a phone interview her son should be presumed innocent until he has a chance to stand trial, though she acknowledged he has a history of arrests in Tennessee. "I really don't think my son would kill a police officer," Applebet said. "He's been a good son. Not to say he's perfect, but he's not the person who they portray him to be in the newspaper." Clardy was shot in the heart Friday during a drug buy set up by authorities at a residence where they expected a suspect to drop off a large amount of drugs, Huntsville police said. Brown, 41, shot Clardy on the porch and was arrested after a short foot chase, authorities said.

Asia

Devastating factory fire kills at least 43 in Indian capital

NEW DELHI (AP)—A fire believed to be caused by an electrical short circuit engulfed a building in India's capital on Sunday where handbags and other items were made by workers earning as little as 2 dollars per day, killing at least 43 people.

The blaze in New Delhi's Karol Bagh neighborhood, a warren of narrow alleyways with electrical wiring strung helter-skelter, was the second major fire there this year. In February, 17 people were killed in a blaze that started in a six-story building's illegal rooftop kitchen.

Karol Bagh contains the city's largest wholesale market for household goods, known as Sadar Bazaar. The area's aging buildings are stacked with apartments, shops, storage facilities and manufacturing units.

Assistant New Delhi police commissioner Anil Kumar Mittal said that "the fire appears to have been caused by an electric short circuit," adding that authorities were investigating whether the factory was operating legally. Building laws and safety norms are routinely flouted in New Delhi, making fires common.

The building's owner, Rihan, who goes by one name, was detained on suspicion of culpable homicide not amounting to murder, Mittal said.

Firefighters had to fight the blaze from 100 meters (yards) away because it broke out in one of the area's many alleyways, tangled in electrical



Fire officers gather outside a factory that caught fire in an alleyway in New Delhi, India, Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019.

AP

wire and too narrow for vehicles to access, authorities said.

A resident of the area, Mohammed Naushad, said he was woken by people wailing at around 4:30 a.m. He went outside to find smoke and flames shooting out of a building near Sadar Bazaar. Inside, he found the fourth floor engulfed in flames. One floor below, he saw "20 to 25 people lying on the floor."

"I don't know if they were dead or unconscious, but they were not moving," Naushad said.

He said he carried at least 10

people out of the flames on his shoulders and into the arms of emergency responders.

Maisuma Bibi, a day laborer making plastic handbags, survived the blaze. She said she was sleeping in a room with about 18 other women and children on the building's first floor when she woke to find a bag full of plastic parts on fire. Her brother-in-law carried her to safety, she said.

Outside a mortuary that was guarded by dozens of police officers, some of the workers' relatives said they had received phone calls from

the men trapped inside, who begged them to call the fire brigade. Family members identified the dead from photos on police officers' phones.

Many of the men were migrant workers from the impoverished border state of Bihar in eastern India, relatives said.

They earned as little as 150 rupees (\$2.10) per day making handbags, caps and other garments, sleeping at the factory between long shifts.

Many of the victims were asleep when the blaze began, according to Yogesh, a police spokesman who uses

1 dead, others missing in eruption of NZ volcano

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—A volcano on a small New Zealand island frequented by tourists erupted with a large plume of ash and steam Monday, killing one person and leaving others injured or missing.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said about dozens of tourists were on or near White Island when it erupted in the afternoon. Police later said one person had been confirmed killed.

Ardern said at an afternoon news briefing that people who were injured in the eruption were being transported to shore. She said the incident appeared to be "very significant."

"All our thoughts are with those affected," she said.

St John medical responders said earlier they believed there were 20 people on the island who were injured and in need of medical treatment.

"My god," wrote Michael Schade on Twitter as he posted video of the eruption. "My family and I had gotten off it 20 minutes before, were waiting at our boat about to leave when we saw it. Boat ride home tending to people our boat rescued was indescribable."

His video showed a wall of ash and steam around the island and helicopters badly damaged and covered in ash. He said one woman was badly injured but seemed "strong" by the end.

Brad Scott, a volcanologist with GNS Science, said the eruption was significant and sent a plume of steam and ash about 12,000 feet (3,660 meters) into the air. He said it had also affected the whole of the White Island crater floor.

The GeoNet agency at first raised its alert level to four, on a scale where five represents a major eruption. It later dropped the alert level back down to three. Scott said that was because the eruption wasn't sustained beyond the initial blast.

White Island sits about 50 kilometers (30 miles) offshore from mainland New Zealand. There will be questions asked as to why tourists were still able to visit the island after scientists recently noted an uptick in volcanic activity.

GeoNet raised the alert level on White Island from one to two on Nov. 18, noting an increase in the amount of sulfur dioxide gas, which originates from

one name.

Dr. Kishore Singh said rescuers brought victims to his government-run hospital and two others in the city. Another 16 people were being treated for burns or smoke inhalation and were in stable condition, Singh said.

Police barred relatives from entering Lok Nayak hospital, where some of the victims were taken. Relatives of the workers cried, consoled one another and jostled for information.

"I was told by someone my nephew is inside, but I haven't seen him," said Mohammad Moti, who was searching for his 22-year-old nephew, Mohammad Chedi.

Fire Services chief Atul Garg said it took 25 fire trucks to put out the blaze. About 60 people, including some of the dead, were taken out of the building, said Mittal, the assistant police commissioner.

New Delhi's chief minister, Arvind Kejriwal, appeared at the scene of the fire, promising victims' families compensation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi described the fire as "extremely horrific."

"My thoughts are with those who lost their loved ones. Wishing the injured a quick recovery," Modi tweeted.

N. Korea opens new mountain resort amid tourism drive

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korean leader Kim Jong Un opened a new mountain spa and ski resort that's intended for people to enjoy "high civilization under socialism" in another example of the country using tourism exemptions in international sanctions to build revenue for its broken economy.

Kim cut the ribbon during the ceremonial opening of the Yangdok Hot Spring Cultural Recreation Center and praised his soldiers for creating a "miracle and prefect edifice" that serves the ruling party's efforts to guide people to modern civilization, a state media report said.

The resort east of the capital has modern rooms, hot spring spas, a ski resort and a horse-riding park, the Korean Central News Agency said Sunday.

"(Kim) hardly repressed his

happiness, saying that it has become possible to provide people with new culture, and one more plan of the Party to make our people enjoy high civilization under socialism as early as possible has come true," KCNA said.

The Yangdok resort, which the North began building last year, has been one of Kim's major development projects along with another mountain resort recently completed in the town of Samjiyon and a summer resort being built in the coastal town of Wonsan.

North Korea also last week announced the creation of a company dedicated to creating medical tourism services to foreign visitors at the country's hot spring spas and state-run hospitals, where they will be able to receive cataract surgeries, dental implants and breast tumor treatments.

North Korea has also de-

manded South Korea tear down its hotels and other facilities at the North's Diamond Mountain resort after Kim declared that the North would redevelop the site on its own. The announcement came after months of frustration over the South's unwillingness to defy U.S.-led sanctions and restart South Korean tours to the resort, which was suspended in 2008 after a North Korean guard fatally shot a South Korean tourist.

Tourism is excluded from the heavy sanctions the U.N. Security Council has imposed on the North over its nuclear weapons program, which includes a full ban on key exports like coal, textile and seafood, strict limitations on oil imports. The sanctions also require all U.N. members to repatriate all North Korean laborers based in their countries by December.

magma deep in the volcano. It also said at the time that over the previous weeks, the volcanic tremor had increased from weak to moderate strength.

Scott said the alert level was often raised and then later dropped again without any eruption. He said there hadn't been any major incidents with tourists visiting the island in the past, although there had been some close calls.

Scott said it was not for him to say whether the island was safe enough to host tourists immediately before Monday's eruption.

White Island is northeast of the town of Tauranga on North Island, one of New Zealand's two main islands. Police were asking people to avoid areas on the North Island that were close to the eruption, including the Whakatane Heads and Muriwai Drive areas.

GeoNet said it is New Zealand's most active cone volcano and about 70% of the volcano is under the sea.

Twelve people were killed on the island in 1914 when it was being mined for sulfur. Part of a crater wall collapsed and a landslide destroyed the miners' village and the mine itself.

World

Ukraine faces new challenges in peace talks with Russia

WARSAW, Poland (AP)—When new Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy sits down Monday for peace talks in Paris with Russian President Vladimir Putin in their first face-to-face meeting, the stakes couldn't be higher.

More than five years of fighting in eastern Ukraine between government troops and Moscow-backed separatists has killed more than 14,000 people, and a cease-fire has remained elusive. While Zelenskiy has made ending the conflict a priority, the political novice arrives at the table with the veteran Kremlin leader in what appears to be a less-advantageous position:

■ Zelenskiy still hasn't had the White House meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump that he sought to bolster his stature on the world stage.

■ French President Emmanuel Macron, the host of the meeting, has made clear recently that he wants to re-engage with Russia and get back to doing business again after five years of sanctions imposed on Russia over its actions in Ukraine.

■ Macron and the other mediator in the talks, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, will be meeting Zelenskiy for the first time since it emerged that he criticized them in the July 25 phone call that has become the focus of an impeachment investigation against Trump.

So there are concerns among those who support Ukraine's sovereignty that Zelenskiy might end up giv-



Ukrainians wave flags of various parties as they gather in central Kyiv, Ukraine, Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019.

AP

ing too many concessions to Putin. That could lead to a backlash from Ukrainians who strongly oppose any rapprochement with Russia.

The talks are being organized in the so-called Normandy Format, which was launched soon after Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014 and its backing of the separatists in eastern Ukraine. The consultations had stalled since 2016 but have been revived following Zelenskiy's election.

"There is a whole cocktail of economics and geopolitics that make the situation for Ukraine very difficult and is posing lot of challenges," said Bruno Lete, a security expert at the German Marshall Fund of the U.S., a leading think tank.

"But it's critical that Europeans and the U.S. support Ukraine," Lete argued. "Without peace and stability in Ukraine, there will never be peace and stability in Europe."

The biggest challenge for

Kyiv probably comes from France itself, with Macron speaking recently of the "brain death" of NATO because of a

lack of coordination and leadership from Washington and also saying he wants to re-engage with Russia.

WORLD BRIEFS

Protesters in Belarus against deeper ties with Moscow

MINSK, Belarus (AP)—Several hundred protesters have braved the repressive climate in Belarus to hold a demonstration against deepening the country's ties with Russia. The Sunday protest by about 500 people in the capital of Minsk was the second consecutive day of protest in a country that usually stifles dissidents. The demonstrations were sparked by a Saturday meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko in the Russian resort of Sochi. Belarus relies on cheap Russian energy and loans to maintain its Soviet-style economy. Russia has been pressuring Belarus for closer integration between the two ex-Soviet neighbors. No immediate deal was announced after Saturday's talks but a senior Russian official said the leaders edged closer to an agreement. The protesters fear that Russia could take over their country, much like Russia annexed the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine in 2014.

Bosnian capital of Sarajevo hit by dangerous air pollution

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AP)—Authorities say air pollution in the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo has reached dangerous levels in recent days, prompting officials to ban freight vehicles from the roads, cancel all outdoor public events and warn citizens to remain indoors. Officials have also reduced coal-fueled central heating temperatures for buildings and banned dust-producing construction. The measures were imposed this week by the Sarajevo regional government. It says Sunday that for most of the past three days, the values for PM10 particulate matter in the air have been at least twice—and sometimes five times—the European Union limit of 50 micrograms per cubic meter. Situated in a deep valley and surrounded

by high mountains, Sarajevo has historically suffered from high concentrations of fog, smog and dust. However, the situation further deteriorated in the past decade due to the proliferation of tall buildings that block airflow, the use of old and highly polluting vehicles and the increased use of coal for heating in the city. According to a recent report by the U.N. Environment Program, Sarajevo residents are exposed to some of the highest concentrations of air pollution in Europe. The U.N. says that has reduced life expectancy in the country up to 1.3 years.

Iran says new budget bucks US oil embargo, uses Russian loan

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iran's president said on Sunday his country will depend less on oil revenue next year, in a new budget that is designed to resist crippling U.S. trade embargoes. Iran is in the grip of an economic crisis. The U.S. re-imposed sanctions that block Iran from selling its crude oil abroad, following President Trump's decision to withdraw from Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. "The budget sends a message to the world that despite the sanctions, we will manage the country," President Hassan Rouhani told the opening session of Parliament. The proposed budget will counter "maximum pressure and sanctions" by the U.S., he said. Iranian media, including the semiofficial Tasnim news agency, said that the submitted budget would raise taxes, sell some government-owned property and add more government bonds. But it wasn't immediately clear from Rouhani's speech whether these proposed measures would fully compensate for plummeting oil revenues. Rouhani added that Iran will also benefit from a \$5 billion loan from Russia that's being finalized. He said the U.S. and Israel will remain "hopeless" despite their goal of weakening Iran through sanctions.

Saudi restaurants no longer need to segregate women and men

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP)—Women in Saudi Arabia will no longer need to use separate entrances from men or sit behind partitions at restaurants in the latest measure announced by the government that upends a major hallmark of conservative restrictions that had been in place for decades.

The decision, which essentially erodes one of the most visible gender segregation restrictions in place, was quietly announced Sunday in a lengthy and technically worded statement by the Municipal and Rural Affairs Ministry.

While some restaurants and cafes in the coastal city of Jiddah and Riyadh's upscale hotels had already been allowing unrelated men and women to sit freely, the move codifies what has been a sensitive issue in the past among traditional Saudis who view gender segregation as a religious requirement. Despite that, neighbor-

ing Muslim countries do not have similar rules.

Restaurants and cafes in Saudi Arabia, including major Western chains like Starbucks, are currently segregated by "family" sections allocated for women who are out on their own or who are accompanied by male relatives, and "singles" sections for just men. Many also have separate entrances for women and partitions or rooms for families where women are not visible to single men. In smaller restaurants or cafes with no space for segregation, women are not allowed in.

Reflecting the sensitive nature of this most recent move, the decision to end requirements of segregation in restaurants was announced in a statement published by the state-run Saudi Press Agency. The statement listed a number of newly-approved technical requirements for buildings, schools, stores and sports cen-

ters, among others.

The statement noted that the long list of published decisions was aimed at attracting investments and creating greater business opportunities.

Among the regulations announced was "removing a requirement by restaurants to have an entrance for single men and (another) for families."

Couched between a new regulation about the length of a building's facade and allowing kitchens on upper floors to operate was another critical announcement stating that restaurants no longer need to "specify private spaces"—an apparent reference to partitions.

Across Saudi Arabia, the norm has been that unrelated men and women are not permitted to mix in public. Government-run schools and most public universities remain segregated, as are most Saudi weddings.

Focus

Half-N. Korean, half-Chinese kids struggle in S. Korea

AP
In this Nov. 6, 2019, photo, Song Hong Ryon speaks during an interview in Uijeongbu, South Korea. Song Hong Ryon looks like any other young woman in South Korea. But three years after her arrival from China, the half-North Korean, half-Chinese 19-year-old has made only two South Korean-born friends and says she's often been hurt by little things, like when people ask if she's from China because of her accent.

By **HYUNG-JIN KIM**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

UIJEONGBU, South Korea (AP)—Song Hong Ryon looks like any other young woman in South Korea. But three years after her arrival from China, the half-North Korean, half-Chinese 19-year-old has made only two South Korean-born friends and says she's often been hurt by little things, like when people ask if she's from China because of her accent.

"I've agonized about it a lot by myself," she said.

Song's mother fled North Korea in the late 1990s in search of food and work in China, like tens of thousands of other North Korean women did to avoid a famine at home. Many women ended up being sold to poor Chinese farmers as brides, before fleeing again and moving to South Korea, which considers the North part of its territory and therefore embraces North Korean refugees.

Many of the children of these marriages, if they're able to reunite with their mothers in the South, are alienated and frustrated as they struggle to navigate a strange culture, cut off from friends and many of their relatives.

To tell their little-known stories, The Associated Press talked to three of the children, two of their North Korean mothers and an array of school teachers, experts and govern-

ment officials.

Many of the North Korean mothers lived in China in constant fear of being captured and repatriated to the North, where they could face torture and lengthy detention. When they made the risky trip to South Korea, they often left their children behind in China.

The lucky ones, after getting jobs and saving money in South Korea, arranged for their children and husbands to travel the country. But some children were abandoned, or their fathers refused to leave their hometowns and move to a place where they had no relatives or friends.

Family reunions, if they happen at all, often take years, meaning many half-Chinese, half-North Korean children must fend for themselves during their adolescent years.

Song said she was 10 when her mother left their home in the northeastern Chinese city of Yanji in 2010. A year later, her father also went to South Korea, leaving her with her grandparents.

"When my mom left, I didn't cry. But when my dad left, I cried a lot," Song said. "I think it was because I felt I was truly alone then."

She only reunited with her parents in 2016 in South Korea after a six-year separation. Last December, her mother died of lung cancer.

"I came to blame God," said Song, a devout Christian. "I asked why this had to happen to me."

In South Korea, children like Song often face crises in identity, a language barrier, public indifference and poor government assistance. Many of them feel like outsiders and get left behind academically and socially. Some return to China, parting again with their North Korean mothers.

They're often confused about whether they're Chinese, South Korean or North Korean refugees. Because neither parent is originally from South Korea, they don't have help assimilating into the country's brutally competitive and fast-paced society.

"Combined with South Korea's social bias against them and their own distorted views about (the South Koreans around them), they mostly give up on opportunities to develop themselves, and this eats away at them fulfilling their potential," said Kim Doo Yeon, the principal of the alternative Great Vision School in Uijeongbu, just north of Seoul, where Song was enrolled for two years.

Another half-Chinese, half-North Korean young woman—who wished to be identified only by her family name, Choe, because she worries that media publicity could damage her life in South Korea—came to Seoul from China last year to reunite with her North Korean refugee mother.

The 20-year-old speaks only a little Korean and has no South Korean friends. She

has yet to travel alone beyond Seoul and often spends time chatting online with her friends back in China.

Her mother fled their home in Dunhua city in northeastern China in early 2017 after seeing a fellow North Korean woman in their village being arrested and sent back to North Korea.

"I was very saddened," the daughter said through tears about her separation with her mother.

Her mother, who asked to be identified as Choe H.Y. because of similar privacy issues, said brokers lured her to cross the border into China with the promise of a job before selling her to her husband for 5,000 yuan (\$710) in 1998.

Song said her mother was also almost sold to a stranger before she ran away and met her father.

Upon arrival in South Korea, these children are given citizenship because their mothers are now South Korean nationals. But because they don't have a direct link to North Korea, they cannot legally receive some other special favors that North Korea-born refugees enjoy.

Those missed benefits include the right to bypass the highly competitive national university entrance exam, get a college tuition waiver and, for men, choose whether to perform two years of mandatory military service.

Choe said her brother is

still in China because of worries that he'll have to serve in the military. Choe wants to improve her Korean and go to a South Korean university, which means she must compete with South Korean students in the university entrance exam.

But language is a problem. "If I try to go deeper in our conversation in Korean, she won't understand, so I become impatient and start speaking Chinese to her," said Choe H.Y.

The fact that these children's mothers mostly began slipping into China about 20 years ago suggests their children are now reaching adulthood and that their plight could soon become a bigger social issue in South Korea.

According to the South Korean Education Ministry, about 1,550 such children were enrolled in primary, middle and high schools in South Korea as of April this year, compared with about 980 North Korea-born students. The true number is likely higher.

In recent years, the government has tried to help by providing 4 million won (\$3,390) to their families and dispatching more bilingual instructors to schools. In May, an opposition lawmaker proposed providing China-born North Korean children with the same assistance given to North Korea-born refugees.

Shim Yang-sup, principal of the Seoul-based alternative

South-North Love School, said the children should be supported because they represent an untapped resource, with the ability to often speak two languages and navigate both Korean and Chinese cultures.

Kim Hyun-seung, 20, from Tianjin, China, arrived in South Korea three years ago to reunite with his mother, who came six years earlier. Kim's 52-year-old mother, Kim So-yeon, described him as "a great, loyal son," who tried not to talk much about his suffering and once cooked special foods for her on her birthday.

Tall and slim, Kim said he wouldn't mind serving in the South Korean military and dreams of being a chef in a French restaurant.

But he doesn't want a serious girlfriend out of fear they'd "become a couple like my father and mother that gives pain to their child, fails to live together and worries about many things."

Song's bilingual ability helped her receive special admission to a university near Seoul. Her first semester starts in March, and she's excited and nervous about meeting her mostly South Korea-born classmates.

"I'm seeing things positively ... even if I complain about some unresolved difficulties I have," she said. "I've sometimes gotten sick because of brooding alone. As time goes by, I'm missing my mom more than ever."

Overdrive

By G. CHAMBERS WILLIAMS III
FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

After getting an all-new hatchback version for 2019, the Toyota Corolla debuts a redesigned sedan lineup for 2020, including the brand's first hybrid model.

The 12th-generation Corolla sedan carries forward much of the new exterior styling that made its debut earlier on the hatchback version.

For the new sedan, prices start at \$19,600 (plus \$955 freight) for the base L model with a continuously variable automatic transmission, and range as high as \$25,550 for the top-of-the-line XSE model with the CVT, which we tested for this report.

In between those are the LE CVT (\$20,050); SE CVT (\$22,050); SE6MT with manual gearbox (\$22,750); Hybrid LE CVT (\$23,100); and XLE CVT (\$24,050).

On gasoline-only versions, there are two engines available, depending on trim level. L, LE and XLE models come with the 1.8-liter four-cylinder from the previous model, now producing 139 horsepower and 126 foot-pounds of torque.

SE and XSE models get an upgrade to a new 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine with 169 horsepower and 151 foot-pounds of torque.

The six-speed manual gearbox is offered only on the SE (Sport Edition) model, where it is a \$700 upgrade over the SE with the automatic. All models have front-wheel drive.

EPA fuel-economy ratings are 29 city/36highway/32 combined for the SE 6MT; 31/40/34 for the SE CVT; 31/38/34 for the XSE; 30/38/33 for the L; 30/38/33 for the LE; and 29/37/32 for XLE.

Toyota says the 12th-generation Corolla sedan and its hatchback variant are based on the Toyota New Global Architecture, described as "far more than a new body structure, bringing together new approaches to engineering, design, assembly, and materials."

New styling cues include shorter front and longer rear overhangs, a lower hood, beefy fender flares and curved fender top surfaces, giving the car a sculpted, athletic appearance.

SE and XSE versions have sportier appearances than the other trims. They feature body-color chin spoilers and aero stabilizing fins, and Toyota says their slim, J-shaped Bi-Beam LED headlights, which wrap into the fenders, are meant to give the car a "steely stare and a distinct nighttime signature." The SE and XSE also have triple J-shaped LED clearance lights, as well as LED turn signals.

Available is the Adaptive



(TOYOTA/TNS)
The 2020 Toyota Corolla features a gas model and a hybrid, new for the U.S.

AUTO REVIEW: Toyota's best-selling Corolla compact gets a makeover and a hybrid for 2020

Front-lighting System (\$450, included on our tester), which turns the low beams slightly in the direction the car is turning, based on steering angle and speed. All models have some LED lights, and SE/XSE versions have smoked outer light lenses.

New exterior colors for 2020 include the iridescent Celestite and Blue Print. Other choices are Blizzard Pearl, Super White, Classic Silver Metallic, Black Sand Pearl, Blue Crush Metallic and Barcelona Red Metallic, which was the color of our test vehicle.

Also a cool feature on our XSE were the 18-inch multi-spoke alloy wheels, which are included on SE models as well. The other trims get 16-inch wheels, except for the hybrid, which has 15-inch.

All but the base model come with a high-resolution eight-inch multimedia touch screen rising from the center dash. L models have a seven-inch touch screen. The instrument panel, cowl, hood and dash belt line have been lowered for increased forward visibility.

The cabin has a mix of high-gloss and matte surfaces, including silver accents with piano black and optional contrasting stitching, giving the interior a more-upscale appearance. Ambient lighting is available for the front door trim, console tray and

front cupholder.

That console tray was the perfect spot for my phone. It also houses the optional wireless phone-charging pad. The cupholders in the center console are terraced to accommodate different beverage containers.

A standard 4.2-inch Multi-Information Display is between the tachometer and speedometer, and a seven-inch display is available (standard on our XSE model). The bigger screen allows for switching between analog and digital speedometers.

SE and XSE have a new front-seat design with the headrest nestling into the shoulder area. LE and XLE have a new U-shaped front seatback. Toyota says these new seat designs create "a sense of youthful, sporty appeal while improving comfort."

Seating surfaces are either cloth or, on our XSE, SofTex faux leather. Interior colors include some two-tone designs. Available colors are black, include black/blue (black as the main color with blue highlights), Moonstone (light gray as the main color with dark gray highlights) and Macadamia (a cream color).

We had an eight-way power-adjustable driver's seat, manual four-way passenger seat, and heated front seats.

The CVT on our XSE had

paddle shifters to simulate a 10-speed sequential-shift transmission, and included a Sport Mode.

Our 2.0-liter engine had Dual VVT-i (Variable Valve Timing-intelligence), with VVT-iE (Variable Valve Timing-intelligence by Electric motor) on the intake side and VVT-i on the exhaust. VVT-iE uses an electric motor instead of oil pressure to control the valve timing, enhancing power output and fuel mileage, and reducing harmful emissions, the automaker says.

We had plenty of power in our tester, and the CVT seemed to shift more like a conventional transmission even without using the paddle shifters.

Among standard features across the board are Toyota's Entune 3.0 connectivity system with Apple Car Play and Amazon Alexa connectivity; a sport-tuned suspension and new underpinnings based on the Toyota New Global Architecture. Surprisingly, though, the audio system does not support Android Auto, which supports Android smartphones, the most-popular phones on the market worldwide.

Among other standard features on the XSE model are dual-zone automatic climate control, a sport gray metallic mesh grille, color-keyed power/heated outside mirrors,

dual chrome exhaust tips, and a power tilt/slide moon roof.

Front door storage pockets include cupholders big enough to hold 24-ounce bottles. Rear doors have cupholders that can handle 16-ounce bottles. Also included are an electronic parking brake, Smart Key system, automatic up/down windows and two front USB outlets.

Available and included on our XSE was the Entune 3.0 Audio Premium JBL system (\$1,715) with eight speakers, 800-watt amplifier, Clari-Fi, Dynamic Voice Recognition, Dynamic Navigation, Dynamic POI Search; and Destination Assist Connect.

Standard is the second generation of the Toyota Safety Sense system, with new active-safety technologies. They include Pre-Collision System with Pedestrian Detection day or night (night is new), or daytime bicyclist (new). It alerts the driver (audible and visual warnings). It can apply the brakes to help mitigate or avoid a collision, using Forward Collision Warning, Brake Assist, and Automatic Emergency Braking. Dynamic Radar Cruise Control was standard on our XSE model.

Also included are Lane Departure Alert with Steering Assist; automatic high beams; and Lane Tracing Assist. The new Road Sign Assist can

identify Stop, Yield, Do Not Enter and Speed Limit signs and display visual and audible alerts. Alerts vary based on the sign type, and are displayed on the Multi-Information Display screen, Toyota says.

There are seven standard air bags and Toyota's Star Safety System, which includes Enhanced Vehicle Stability Control, Traction Control, Electronic Brake-force Distribution, Brake Assist, antilock brakes and Smart Stop Technology.

Blind-spot monitoring is standard on the XSE. All models have a backup camera with guidelines.

While there is room for up to five people, the rear bench seat is more comfortable for two rather than three, and our rear passengers said they had adequate knee, leg and head room. A middle armrest with two cupholders can be pulled down for the outboard passengers when no one is sitting in the center position.

The trunk has 13.1 cubic feet of space.

Our 2020 Corolla XSE sedan also included paint protection film (\$395) and a carpet mat package (\$249).

Total sticker price was \$29,214, including freight and options, which brought us a well-equipped vehicle that was fun to drive along with being quite practical.

THE NUTS & BOLTS

2020 TOYOTA COROLLA SEDAN

■ The package: Compact, four-door, five-passenger, four-cylinder, front-wheel-drive hatchback.
■ Highlights: Toyota has rolled out its redesigned Corolla sedan for 2020, with new styling inside and out, along with more safety technology. This is a

roomy and comfortable vehicle that seems more like a small luxury car than the affordable compact it is.

■ Negatives: Rear middle seat is tight for adults or teens.

■ Engine: 1.8-liter inline four-cylinder, gasoline, normally aspirated; 2.0-liter inline four-cylinder, gasoline, normally aspirated (SE and XSE only).

■ Transmission: Six-speed man-

ual (SE only) or continuously variable automatic.

■ Power/torque: 139 HP/126 foot-pounds (1.8-liter); 169 HP/151 foot-pounds (2.0-liter). Length: 182.3 inches.

■ Curb weight range: 2,910-3,150 pounds.

■ Brakes: front/rear: Disc/disc, antilock, with electric park brake.

■ Cargo volume: 13.1 cubic feet.

■ Air bags: Front; driver knee;

front seat-mounted side; roof-mounted side-curtain for both rows.

■ Electronic stability control: Standard.

■ Fuel capacity/type: 13.2 gallons/unleaded regular.

■ EPA fuel economy: 29 city/36 highway/32 combined (SE 6MT); 31/40/34 (SE CVT); 31/38/34 (XSE); 30/38/33 (L, LE); 29/37/32 (XLE).

■ Major competitors: Honda Civic, Volkswagen Jetta, Mazda3, Hyundai Elantra, Nissan Sentra.

■ Base price range: \$19,600-\$25,550, plus \$955 freight.

■ Price as tested: \$29,214, including freight and options (XSE).

■ On the Road rating: 9.2 (of a possible 10).

Prices shown are manufacturer's suggested retail; actual selling price may vary.

Life & Style



In this Dec. 4, 2019 photo, gallery owner Emmanuel Perrotin poses next to Maurizio Cattelan's "Comedian" at the Art Basel exhibition in Miami Beach, Fla. The work sold for \$120,000.

AP

Banana, duct tape add up to \$150,000 at Art Basel Miami

3D-printed cocktails, a traffic jam sculpture made of hundreds of tons of sand and more celebrity sightings than a Kardashian Christmas party were all part of over-the-top festivities during the week of Art Basel Miami, but it was a banana that stole the show.

The most talked-about artwork of the week was titled "Comedian"—a spotty banana duct-taped to a wall by artist Maurizio Cattelan.

According to artnet News, two pieces quickly sold for \$120,000. The Paris-based Perrotin gallery raised the price to \$150,000 for the third piece, which will be sold to a

museum. The bananas were bought at a local grocery store. No instructions were given on what to do as the banana ages.

The gallery did not respond to several emails from The Associated Press seeking comment.

On Saturday, David Datuna removed the banana from the wall, unpeeled it and took a

bite as a large crowd documented it with their phones.

"I respect Maurizio but it's art performance. Hungry artist," he said.

"You have more? \$150,000," he joked.

On Friday night, art collector Wayne Boich hosted a lavish dinner at his home that included Dan Marino, Dwy-

ane Wade and Chris Bosh. The after-party crowd, including Floyd Mayweather, Hannah Bronfman, and Alesso, watched a performance by Wyclef Jean, who did a throwback to the Fugees with "Ready or Not," and later brought dozens of girls onstage to dance with him before passing the mic to "Country Grammar" singer Nelly. Rapper 2 Chainz closed out the night.

Across town, rapper Travis Scott didn't take the stage until 3:30 a.m. at a sold-out performance at 24-hour nightclub E11even. Scott stood on top of the DJ booth tossing dollar bills into the crowd and yelling at partygoers to put away their phones and enjoy the moment.

The city of Miami Beach commissioned a million-dollar traffic jam by artist Leandro Erlich. It took 330 tons (300 metric tons) of sand to construct 66 life-sized sculptures of cars and trucks stuck in an imaginary traffic jam on the oceanfront of popular Lincoln Road. The installation alludes to Florida's fragile position in the large universal canvas, touching on climate crisis and rising sea levels.

The Shore Club South Beach also focused on global warming where a 36-foot-long (11-meter-long) floating ice sculpture inside the pool spelled out the words "HOW DARE YOU." The piece, titled "Climate Meltdown" by artist Rubem Robierb, lasted approximately eight hours.

Photographer David Yarow's picture of real-life "Wolf of Wall Street" Jordan

Belfort sold for \$200,000. The piece was signed by director Martin Scorsese and Leonardo DiCaprio.

Bulleit's novel 3D-printed bar also drew a curious crowd, where guests watched a robotic arm disperse microscopic drops of liquid into drinks in a pre-set pattern. The whiskey maker has printed more than 7,800 cocktails since partnering with a robotics engineer.

On Saturday, G-Eazy performed poolside at the Maxim magazine party, surprising guests when he brought rapper Wale onstage to perform their song, "Fashion Week," together.

Haute Living hosted a party for Fat Joe's new album "Family Ties." Wearing a baby blue track suit, the rapper entertained guests including DJ Khaled, Fabolous, Jeezy and Too Short.

"We grew up in the projects and now we in a 100 million dollar house rapping about our history," he told the crowd before pulling Swizz Beatz onstage to perform.

At various clubs over the weekend, Lil Wayne, A\$AP Rocky, Rick Ross and 2 Chainz performed. Sean Penn and DiCaprio partied late night at Rockwell x 1 Oak, where Gucci Mane took the stage. Brody Jenner, Meek Mill and Too Short hung out at LIV to hear Alesso play.

And "Cats" actor Idris Elba, who performs under the name DJ Big Driis, spun tracks along with Diplo at an extremely packed club Basement on Saturday night. (AP)

Sesame Street puppeteer Carol Spinney dies at age 85

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Carol Spinney, who gave Big Bird his warmth and Oscar the Grouch his growl for nearly 50 years on "Sesame Street," died Sunday at the age of 85 at his home in Connecticut, according to the Sesame Workshop.

The legendary puppeteer lived for some time with dystonia, which causes involuntary muscle contractions, the Sesame Workshop said in a statement.

Spinney voiced and operated the two major Muppets from their inception in 1969 when he was 36, and performed them almost exclusively into his 80s on the PBS kids' television show that later moved to HBO. His death comes on the same day that "Sesame Street" is being honored for lifetime achievements in the arts as a Kennedy Center Honors recipient.

"Before I came to 'Sesame Street,' I didn't feel like what I was doing was very impor-

tant," Spinney said when he announced his retirement in 2018. "Big Bird helped me find my purpose."

Through his two characters, Spinney gained huge fame that brought international tours, books, record albums, movie roles, and visits to the White House.

"Carol was an artistic genius whose kind and loving view of the world helped shape and define Sesame Street from its earliest days in 1969 through five decades, and his legacy here at Sesame Workshop and in the cultural firmament will be unending," the Sesame Workshop said.

But he never became a household name.

"I may be the most unknown famous person in America," Spinney said in his 2003 memoir. "It's the bird that's famous."

Spinney gave "Sesame Street" its emotional yin and yang, infusing the 8-foot-2 Big Bird with a child-

like sweetness often used to handle sad subjects, and giving the trashcan-dwelling Oscar, whose voice Spinney based on a New York cabbie, a street-wise cynicism that masked a tender core.

"I like being miserable. That makes me happy," Oscar often said. "But I don't like being happy, so that makes me miserable."

To colleagues there was no question which character the kindly Spinney resembled.

"Big Bird is him and he is Big Bird," former "Sesame Street" head writer Norman Stiles said in a 2014 documentary on Spinney.

It wasn't easy being Big Bird. To play the part, Spinney would strap a TV monitor to his chest as his only eyes to the outside. Then the giant yellow bird body was placed over him. He held his right arm aloft constantly to operate the head, and used his left hand to operate both arms. The bird tended to slouch more as the

years took their toll.

In 2015, Spinney switched to just providing the characters' voices. That year, the longtime PBS show inked a five-year pact with HBO that gave the premium cable channel the right to air new episodes nine months before they air on PBS.

Big Bird's builder Kermit Love always insisted that his design was a puppet, not a costume. But to many children, he was neither. He was real.

"Eight-year-olds have discovered to their horror that he's a puppet," Spinney told The Associated Press in 1987.

Born in 1933 in Waltham Massachusetts, Spinney had a deeply supportive mother who built him a puppet theater after he bought his first puppet, a monkey, at age 8.

He spent four years in the U.S. Air Force after high school, then returned to Massachusetts and broke into television. He teamed up with fellow puppeteer Judy



In this Friday, Nov. 8, 2019, file photo, Sesame Street's Big Bird and puppeteer Carol Spinney participate in the ceremonial lighting of the Empire State Building in honor of Sesame Street's 50th anniversary in New York.

AP

Valentine for their own daily series, then worked on a Boston version of the clown show "Bozo's Big Top." Spinney in this period had three children, Jessica, Melissa and Benja-

min, all from his 1960 to 1971 marriage to Janice Spinney. He later married his second wife Debra in 1979, and the two were nearly inseparable for the rest of his life.



In this May 1, 2019 file photo, Juice WRLD accepts the award for top new artist at the Billboard Music Awards at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas.

‘Frozen 2’ leads box office again; ‘Playmobil’ flops

NEW YORK (AP)—“Frozen 2” blanketed multiplexes for the third straight weekend, continuing its reign at No. 1 with \$34.7 million in ticket sales, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The Walt Disney Co. animated sequel has already grossed \$919.7 million worldwide. It will soon become the sixth Disney release this year to cross \$1 billion, a record sure to grow to seven once “Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker” hits theaters later this month. Early next week, Disney will cross \$10 billion at the global box office this year.

But the weekend overall at the box office was yet another disappointing one for the movie industry. A handful of under-performing releases and a relatively thin wide-release schedule hasn’t helped the 5.6% slide in domestic ticket sales from last year, according to data firm Comscore.

This weekend produced an outright flop in “Playmobil: The Movie,” the week’s only new wide release. The STX Films release was never expected to do well, but it bombed so thoroughly that it will rank among the worst-performing wide-releases ever. It grossed \$668,000 in 2,337 venues, giving it a per-theater average of just \$286.

A handful of companies combined to produce the \$75 million French film, including Wild Bunch and Pathe.

The top five films were almost unchanged from last weekend.

Rian Johnson’s acclaimed, star-studded whodunit “Knives Out” remained in second place with \$14.2 million, declining a modest 47% in its second week of release. With \$63.5 million cumulatively and \$124.1 million worldwide, the Lionsgate release has been one of the season’s bright spots.

So has James Mangold’s “Ford v Ferrari,” which stayed in third place with \$6.5 million over its fourth weekend. The racing drama, starring Matt Damon and Christian Bale, has sped to a global take of \$168 million for Disney, which acquired the film’s original studio, 20th Century Fox, earlier this year. The film cost about \$100 million to make.

Melina Matsoukas’ outlaw romance “Queen & Slim” moved up to fourth in its second week with \$6.5 million, swapping places with Marielle Heller’s Mister Rogers drama “A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood” (\$5.2 million in its third weekend).

Todd Haynes’ true-story legal drama “Dark Waters,” starring Mark Ruffalo as a defense attorney who takes on the DuPont chemical company, expanded nationwide to 2,011 theaters. The Focus Features release made \$4.1 million.

Celine Sciamma’s acclaimed period romance “Portrait of a Lady on Fire” opened at two locations with a very strong \$33,552 per-theater average. Neon will release the French film wider in February.

Some of the weekend’s most widespread movie watching may have been on Netflix, though the streaming service doesn’t disclose viewership tallies or box-office receipts.

After a three-week theatrical run, Noah Baumbach’s “Marriage Story,” one of the year’s most critically acclaimed films, began streaming Friday. On Friday, Nielsen said Martin

1. “Frozen 2,” \$34.7 million (\$90.2 million international).
2. “Knives Out,” \$14.2 million (\$18 million international).
3. “Ford v Ferrari,” \$6.5 million (\$8.3 million international).
4. “Queen & Slim,” \$6.5 million.
5. “A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood,” \$5.2 million.
6. “Dark Waters,” \$4.1 million.
7. “21 Bridges,” \$2.9 million.
8. “Playing With Fire,” \$2 million.
9. “Midway,” \$1.9 million.
10. “Joker,” \$1 million.

Scorsese’s “The Irishman” last weekend drew an average audience of 13.6 million viewers from Nov. 27 to Dec. 1. Netflix has said Nielsen numbers, which only estimate U.S. viewership, reflect an incomplete picture.

Amazon likewise didn’t release ticket sales for “The Aeronauts,” which opened in 52 theaters over the weekend. Tom Harper’s film, which cost \$40 million to make, stars Eddie Redmayne and Felicity Jones as 19th century balloonists.

A week before it opens in North America, Sony’s “Jumanji: The Next Level” debuted in 18 international countries where it made \$52.5 million. The sequel to 2017’s “Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle,” which grossed \$962 million worldwide, is expected to lead the box office next weekend.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included.

Rapper Juice WRLD dies after medical emergency in Chicago

CHICAGO (AP)—Rapper Juice WRLD, who launched his career on SoundCloud before becoming a streaming juggernaut and rose to the top of the charts with the Sting-sampled hit “Lucid Dreams,” died early Sunday after a “medical emergency” at Chicago’s Midway International Airport.

The rapper, whose legal name was Jarad A. Higgins, was 21. Authorities have not released details about his cause of death.

He was pronounced dead at a hospital around 3:15 a.m. and taken to the Cook County medical examiner’s office several hours later, according to office spokeswoman Natalia Derevyanny, who said an autopsy would take place Monday.

Chicago police launched a death investigation after a 21-year-old male experiencing a “medical emergency” was transported from Midway to an area hospital. Police said there were no signs of foul play and those aboard

the aircraft were cooperating with authorities. Chicago Fire Department spokesman Larry Langford said the man experienced cardiac arrest and was taken to a hospital from a hangar operated by Atlantic Aviation at Midway, away from the main terminal, where private planes land. Atlantic didn’t return a message Sunday.

The rapper, who was named top new artist at the 2019 Billboard Music Awards in May, lived in the Chicago suburb of Homewood where he stood out as a musician early on.

Juice WRLD turned 21 only days earlier. He was only two years out of high school.

Like a good number of young hip-hop performers, Juice WRLD blended rapping and singing on his songs, sometimes mumbling words and focusing more on melody. His hit “Lucid Dreams,” which heavily samples Sting’s 1993 song “Shape of My Heart,” was a six-times platinum success and reached No. 2 on the

all-genre Hot 100 chart. It reached No. 1 on Billboard’s Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and Hot Rap Songs charts.

“I was very impressed by what he put on top of (my version),” Sting told The Associated Press this year. “It’s a really good song.”

Juice WRLD got his start on the music sharing platform SoundCloud before signing to a record label and finding major success on streaming services. His major-label debut album, “Goodbye & Good Riddance,” was a platinum success. It featured the hit “All Girls Are the Same,” which gained platinum status, alongside seven more platinum hits including “Armed & Dangerous,” “Robbery,” “Fine China” and “Legends,” which features the lyrics: “What’s the 27 Club?/We ain’t making it past 21.”

He’s had 10 songs reach gold status and also had success with 2018’s “WRLD on Drugs,” a collaborative album with rapper-singer-producer Future.

Big Bird, Ronstadt, Sally Field celebrated at Kennedy Center

WASHINGTON (AP)—Actress Sally Field, singer Linda Ronstadt and the disco-funk band Earth Wind and Fire shared the spotlight Sunday night as part of the latest group of recipients of the Kennedy Center Honors for lifetime achievement in the arts.

Also in this year’s class were conductor Michael Tilson Thomas and long-running children’s TV show “Sesame Street.”

Sunday’s event featured a genuinely unique event for the Kennedy Center as Big Bird walked the red carpet along with fellow “Sesame Street” characters Bert and Ernie,

Abby and Cookie Monster, accompanied by their respective humans.

The massive yellow avian’s appearance held a particular resonance as Caroll Spinney, Big Bird’s original puppeteer, died earlier Sunday at age 85.

“I’m heartbroken that this happened on this particular day,” said Sonia Manzano, who played Maria for decades on “Sesame Street.” “But I’m glad we’re all together.”

As she entered the building, Field, who has won two Academy Awards and three Emmys, reflected on the unique nature of the Kennedy Center Honors medallion.

“It’s not about one performance. It’s not about being the flavor of the month,” she said. “It recognizes artists whose body of work has resonated over the years.”

Once again, the attendance of President Donald Trump was a topic of speculation until the White House said Friday that neither he nor first lady Melania Trump would attend. Trump skipped the past two celebrations; in 2017, multiple recipients threatened to boycott the event if he attended.

Tom Hanks, as the entered the building, pointed out that this annual tension seems

unique to the Trump administration.

“We’ve been here for Republican presidents and we’ve been here for Democratic presidents,” he said. “We were all celebrating the arts in America.”

Last year’s ceremony contained very few overt political references. But this year, several signs of the country’s divisive political mood bubbled to the surface. During the annual Saturday night gala dinner for honorees at the State Department, Ronstadt, a longtime liberal activist, reportedly had a testy exchange with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Zellweger, Pitt and ... "Cats"? Here come the Golden Globes

NEW YORK (AP)—Renee Zellweger, Brad Pitt and Eddie Murphy are locks. But whether "Cats" has it in the bag, too, we won't know until the 77th annual Golden Globes are announced Monday morning.

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association will unveil their nominations in Los Angeles beginning at 8:04 a.m. EST. They will be live-streamed on the Golden Globes' Facebook page and their website, with the second wave of nominees carried live on NBC's "Today" show

at 8:15 a.m. Dakota Fanning, Susan Kelechi Watson and Tim Allen will announce the nominations from the Beverly Hilton hotel.

The Globes separate their top categories between drama and comedy/musical, giving some movies well outside the awards conversation an opportunity.

While movies like Martin Scorsese's "The Irishman," Quentin Tarantino's "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood" and Noah Baumbach's "Marriage Story" are widely

expected to come away with numerous nods, few would be surprised if the press association—a group known for its sometimes quirky picks, its penchant for A-listers and its fondness for musicals—also included the upcoming, much-memed big-screen adaptation of "Cats." The HFPA, a group with 87 voting members, was shown an unfinished cut of Tom Hooper's film.

More likely are nominations for the likes of Joaquin Phoenix ("Joker"), Jennifer Lopez ("Hustlers"), Murphy

("Dolemite Is My Name"), Pitt and Leonardo DiCaprio ("Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood," slated as a comedy for the Globes), Zellweger ("Judy"), Awkwafina ("The Farewell") and the leads of "Marriage Story": Adam Driver and Scarlett Johansson.

In the early going, Netflix has dominated awards season. "The Irishman" last week won best film from the New York

Film Critics Circle and the National Board of Review. "Marriage Story" virtually swept the IFP Gotham Awards.

On the television side, the Globes often relish being the first awards group where late fall series are eligible, meaning that Netflix's "The Crown" and Apple's "The Morning Show" could have a big morning, along with Emmy winners "Fleabag"

and "Game of Thrones." HBO's "Watchmen" could also be a factor.

Ricky Gervais will host the Globes for the fifth time on January 5. Tom Hanks, a possible nominee for his performance as Mister Rogers in "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood," will receive the Cecil B. DeMille Award. The Carol Burnett Award will go to Ellen DeGeneres.

LA film critics name 'Parasite' year's best film

NEW YORK (AP)—The Los Angeles Film Critics Association named the uproarious class satire "Parasite" the year's best picture and its maker, Bong Joon Ho, best director.

The critics group convened Sunday in Los Angeles and announced their awards on Twitter, a few days after their New York counterparts chose "The Irishman" as their best film of 2019. The LA critics selected Martin Scorsese's mafia epic as their runner-up.

"Parasite" actor Song Kang Ho, who plays the patriarch of a family of con artists who infiltrate a wealthy family's home, was also awarded best supporting actor by the critics association.

Best actress went to Mary

Kay Place, star of Kent Jones' acclaimed low-budget character study "Diane." Antonio Banderas, star of Pedro Almodovar's self-reflective drama "Pain and Glory" took best actor. Best supporting actress was awarded to Jennifer Lopez for Lorene Scarfaria's stripper crime drama "Hustlers."

The critics will hand out their awards at a gala on Jan. 11. Elaine May is this year's previously announced career achievement award winner.

A full list of their selections:

Best picture: "Parasite"

Best director: Bong Joon Ho, "Parasite"

Best actress: Mary Kay Place, "Diane"

Best actor: Antonio Ban-

deras, "Pain and Glory"

Best supporting actress: Jennifer Lopez, "Hustlers"

Best supporting actor: Song Kang Ho, "Parasite"

Best screenplay: Noah Baumbach, "Marriage Story"

Best cinematography: Claire Mathon, "Portrait of a Lady on Fire" and "Atlantics"

Best documentary: "American Factory"

Best foreign language film: "Pain and Glory"

Best score: Dan Levy, "I Lost My Body"

Best animation: "I Lost My Body"

Best production design: Barbara Ling, "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood"

Best editing: Todd Douglas Miller, "Apollo 11"

Author Milan Kundera has Czech citizenship restored

PRAGUE (AP)—Milan Kundera, the Czech-born author of "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" has been given back the citizenship of his homeland that he lost 40 years ago.

The Czech ambassador to France, Petr Drulak, told Czech public television he handed Kundera his citizen-

ship certificate last week in his Paris apartment.

It's a result of Kundera's meeting with Prime Minister Andrej Babis in Paris last year.

Kundera fled Communist Czechoslovakia and has lived in France since 1975, and it is there that he published his most famous books, includ-

ing "The Book of Laughter and Forgetting," "The Art of the Novel" and "Immortality." His later works, written in French, were not translated into Czech.

The 90-year-old lives in virtual seclusion, only travels to his homeland incognito and never speaks to reporters.

New Zealand leader finds perfect spokesman: Stephen Colbert

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—New Zealand has relied on hobbits, bungee jumping and rugby to entice tourists in the past.

Now Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern may have found the perfect spokesman to embrace all of the above and more: American comedian Stephen Colbert.

In a wide-ranging interview with The Associated Press on Thursday, Ardern talked about the boost to the country's vital tourism industry that Colbert appears to have singlehandedly orchestrated.

Last month, Colbert recounted his adventures in New Zealand during a weeklong humorous

segment on CBS's "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert."

The first segment shows Ardern picking up Colbert from the airport in her car and hosting him for a backyard barbecue, with singer Lorde in attendance.

"It was an amazing opportunity to do something for New Zealand," Ardern said. "He had a genuine love of New Zealand though. Like, very genuine. So, it actually made it really easy."

In other segments, Colbert attempts to play rugby and bungee jump, and makes a movie with Peter Jackson, who directed "The Lord of the Rings" and "The Hobbit" trilogies.

Tourism generates more

foreign income for New Zealand than any other industry.

Ardern said tourism officials have reported a spike in Americans investigating holidays in New Zealand since the segments ran.

"I think it probably exceeded everyone's expectations, the amount of coverage the country got from it," she said. "So I think that's no bad thing."

Ardern said Colbert's segments went beyond the typical depictions of New Zealand's beautiful scenery and adventure sports.

"It showcased our people really well, and just who we are," she said.



AP
In this March 16, 2019, file photo, Stephen Colbert attends the 36th Annual PaleyFest "An Evening with Stephen Colbert" at the Dolby Theatre on Saturday, March 16, 2019, in Los Angeles.

Mom weighs bringing defiant daughter on family vacation

DEAR ABBY: One of our daughters (18) has been rebelling for the last couple of years. She's not doing well in community college. She is dating a drug user and has been caught in lie after lie, including about spending the night at friends' homes.

She has now decided she no longer wants to live with our rules, which include staying enrolled in college full time and making progress, doing a few household chores, telling us where she is going and when we can expect her home, and having no overnights. She has moved out and in with a friend.

We know she's immature and will grow up eventually. We are heartbroken but understand we can't control this. We are praying for her safety.

We have an out-of-town wedding coming up and have decided to make a family vacation out of it. On one hand, we want to include her, not wanting to destroy what little relationship we have. On the other, we do not want to be "used" for a fun vacation. Because she has chosen to live on her own as an adult, she must pay her own way (which she can't afford). Should we take her or not?

MOM OF AN ALMOST-ADULT

DEAR MOM: Your daughter has made a choice—to be out from under your thumb and on her own. The "price" for her independence is being unable to depend upon you

and your husband to foot the bill for her expenses.

Would she be running wild and staying out all night if you take her with you? You would have to set some rules beforehand and get her to agree to abide by them if she is going to be included with her sibling(s). A positive experience as a family may be what you all need right now. But only you can decide whether it's worth taking the chance.

DEAR ABBY: I am recently divorced, but my husband, "Danny," and I still see each other. The other night he mentioned that his ex-girlfriend texts him. He also allows her to follow him on Instagram but says he isn't following her. It really bothers me because she and Danny were in contact when we were married, "just as friends" is what he said. He repeated with 100% certainty that he has no interest in ever getting back together with her.

I spend a lot of nights at his place, and he spends nights with me, so I guess I have to trust his word, but it's eating me up inside. I have asked him to not allow her to follow him on Instagram, but he has not done that yet. He said he doesn't care who follows him.

UNFOLLOW IN CONNECTICUT

DEAR UNFOLLOW: I'm confused. Exactly what is your question? You say you are divorced, but you are still

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

acting—and thinking—like you are Danny's wife. He's a free man now, and you not only do not have the right to dictate who should or shouldn't follow him on Instagram, but also don't have the right to tell him he can't see another woman if he wishes.

Face it, you are BOTH free now. You can't be cheated on by a husband who is no longer your husband. Consider this: It might be healthier for you to spend less time with Danny and devote more time to moving forward with your life.

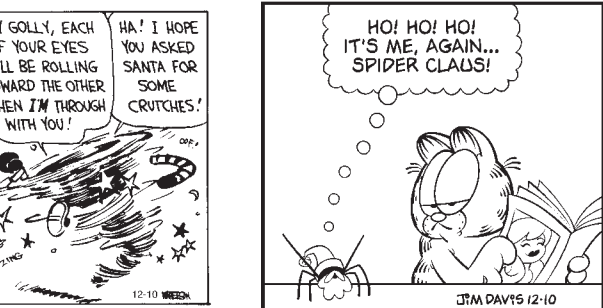
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Pastimes

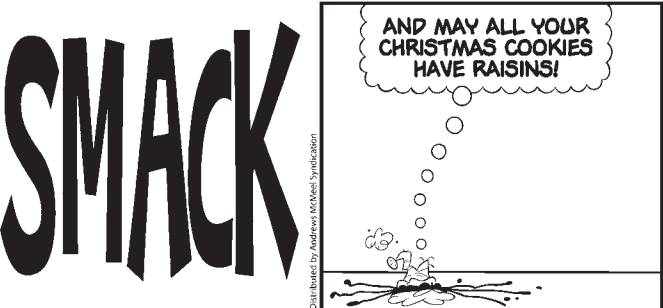
Calvin and Hobbes



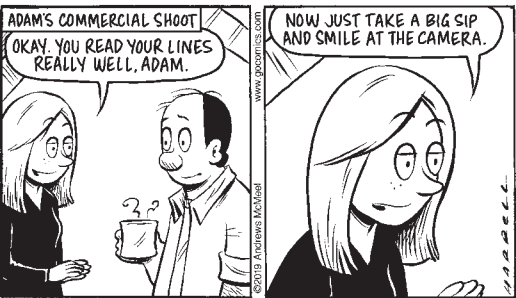
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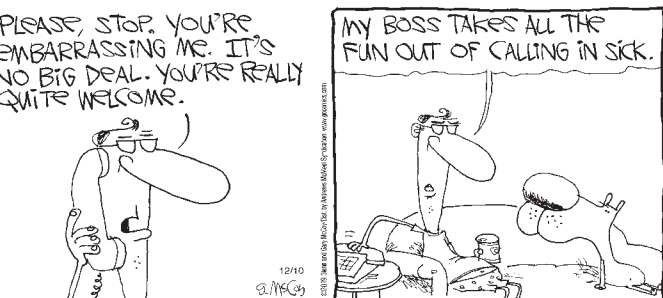
Adam@home



The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Wheel-chair access

5 Seeger or Sampras

9 Happy hour venue

12 Otherwise

13 Algerian seaport

14 Son-gun link

15 Church fundraiser handout

17 URL ending

18 Some July babies

19 Tea variety

21 Thread

24 Mr. Guinness

25 Sick as —

26 Nutty holiday treat

30 Actor Harrison

31 Two score

32 French article

33 Popular pasta

35 Trucker with a handle

36 —

37 Old hat

38 Belly button type

40 Miles away

42 Frequently

43 Arc in a statistical graph

48 "The Raven" writer

49 "Casa-blanca" role

50 Line of fashion?

51 Old map letters

52 Carolina college

53 Makes a choice

DOWN

1 Yank's foe

2 "The Greatest"

3 AOL rival

4 Pirate costume part

5 Little, to Verdi

6 Eventful periods

7 Sailor

8 Bridge game tactic

9 Reading groups

10 Roundish do

11 Fury

16 Not 'neath

20 Poetic dusk

21 Mac-Donald's place

22 Concept

23 Utility knife

24 Play opener

26 Indigent

27 East ender?

28 Small bills

29 Richard of "Chicago"

31 Comped thing

34 "— was saying ..."

35 Tenor Enrico

37 Lobbying gp.

38 "Clumsy mel!"

39 Sci-fi fleet

40 To boot

41 Spanish custard

44 Right angle

45 Workout unit

46 Cistern

47 Ambulance initials

Solution time: 22 mins.

ASTI WOW DELE
SHANGHAI TMAC
SHOPWORN NINO
AES GRETTEL
BEGIN TTSAR
ALAN POPCORN
NAM ARRAY OIL
NEWBORN CATE
RODE FARSI
FORYOU AER
ERIE CAPEHORN
SACS EMPLOYEE
SLOT RAT PLOT

Yesterday's answer 12-10

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Raven-Symone, 34; Emmanuelle Chriqui, 44; Meg White, 45; Kenneth Branagh, 59.

Happy Birthday: Your emotions will be difficult to dismiss. You'll feel more inclined to say what's on your mind and question anyone who is vague or appears to be playing games with you. Gather your thoughts methodically, and venture down a path that feels right and shows promise. This year is about stabilization, not upset and disruption. Your numbers are 7, 12, 18, 22, 27, 35, 43.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Take care of matters personally. The only way to get things done the way you want is to do them yourself. Someone will disappoint you or leave you in a vulnerable position. Take charge, and leave nothing to chance. ★★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Make changes that will bring you closer to someone you love. A day trip, educational pursuit or opportunity to get involved in something unique looks inviting. Make a change, and it will boost your confidence and your enthusiasm. ★★★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Emotions will be raised, and what you say will matter. Choose your words wisely, be precise and follow through with any promises you make. Ask questions if someone evades issues or tries to confuse you. Reveal only what's necessary. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Pick up the pace, and work in tandem with people who bring out the best in you. Let your creative mind lead the way. You will be praised for your insight into future trends. Romance is on the rise. ★★★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Be less concerned about what everyone else is doing, and put in more time and effort on what you want to accomplish. Don't labor over something you cannot change. Sport a positive and amicable attitude. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Easy does it when dealing with emotional matters. Listen, be understanding and find reasonable solutions. By doing your best to make things better, you will gain the respect and confidence of others. Personal gain is within reach. ★★★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You can address issues that are bothering you as long as you listen and compromise. Getting along with others will be half the battle if you want to move forward. Be careful not to jeopardize your health or your finances. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Round up the people and the accessories you'll require to reach your goal. Set your sights on how you intend to improve your life, the way you live or whatever it will take to get ahead professionally. Romance is featured. ★★★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Refuse to let your emotions stifle your productivity. Live up to your promises, and follow through with your plans. Don't fall short because someone meddles in your business. Make decisions based on truth and practicality. Don't share personal information. ★★★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Take action, put your plans in motion and enjoy whatever benefits come with the work you have completed. A change at home will encourage family fun or enjoying a space you have cleared to host a project you want to start. ★★★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Refuse to let anger set in or your patience run thin. Make decisions that will encourage getting ahead. Put your time and effort into doing the best job possible. Refuse to let personal matters slow you down. Make emotional well-being a priority. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Emotions will surface, pushing you to sort through an uncomfortable situation and direct your attention to a sound plan that will rectify the problem. Have a project in mind before you address matters that concern a close friend, family member or your lover. ★★★★★

Birthday Baby: You are trusting, sensitive and insightful. You are bold and ambitious.

Visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
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51				52				53		

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

	2			9				
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7	6				2	4	5	
				1			8	

Difficulty Level ★★ 12/10

Yesterday's Answer

7	4	9	2	8	6	3	1	5
3	5	8	9	1	4	6	7	2
2	6	1	5	7	3	9	4	8
9	1	3	7	4	5	8	2	6
6	7	4	8	9	2	1	5	3
5	8	2	3	6	1	4	9	7
1	9	7	6	5	8	2	3	4
4	2	6	1	3	7	5	8	9
8	3	5	4	2	9	7	6	1

Difficulty Level ★ 12/99

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WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

A TELENOVELA Solution: 7 letters

L Y S E S R A T S E I R E S N
F A H S T O R I E S E H T I D
S E T T A R N Q C T N A E B I
N O U I L L U S R O U P L L G
S L A D N A C S E L T P E I L
P H E P R O E S T P R Y V N A
A C M T O A C W E B O L I G T
N I E P R P M I R R F I S D I
I R H O I S E A X R V M I E P
S O C R V S Z R I E P A O T S
H M S T A I S E A E M F N A O
O A E U L K N O R S Y O U T H
W N V G R D A U G H T E R S S
S C O A Y N O T E L L I U E F
R E L L I R H T R I A N G L E

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Brazil, Class, Daughters, Drama, Estate, Family, Feud, Feuilleton, Fortune, Friend, Gossip, Happy, Hospital, Kiss, Latin, Love, Maid, Mexico, Peru, Plots, Portugal, Quarters, Rich, Rivalry, Romance, Scandals, Scheme, Secret, Series, Servants, Shows, Sibling, Soap Opera, Sons, Spanish, Stars, Stories, Television, Thriller, Triangle, Trust, Wealthy, Youth
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Cole gets 7-year, \$245-million offer from Yankees

NEW YORK—Gerrit Cole is going to get paid. Everyone knew that headed into this off-season, but now we know the benchmark for his payday.

Reports from the New York Times disclosed that free agent starter Gerrit Cole has a seven-year, \$245 million contract offer on the table from the Yankees.

The deal would set a record for total value and average annual value for a pitcher, besting Zack Greinke's \$34.4 million AAV and David Price's \$217 million total.

While it is possible that Cole signs before the end of the Winter Meetings on Thursday, clients of Scott Boras have tended to sign later in the off-season, so this may be a protracted process with the report as a jumping-off point. Both the Yankees' and Angels' front offices have received clearance from ownership to break the bank to sign Cole.

Cole, 29, could not have timed having a career year any better. During the regular season, he led all of baseball with 326 strikeouts and led the American League with a 2.50 ERA while also posting a 20-5 record and walking only 48 batters across 212 1/3 innings. He performed brilliantly in the playoffs as well, holding the opposition to seven runs on 21 hits and 11 walks with 47 strikeouts over 36 2/3 innings of work as the Astros narrowly missed out on winning another championship.

Cole is entering his age-29 season, so a deal of at least seven years would take him well into his mid 30's. Teams, especially lately, have been hesitant to commit to pitchers,



AP
In this Oct. 27, 2019, file photo, Houston Astros starting pitcher Gerrit Cole throws against the Washington Nationals during the first inning of Game 5 of the baseball World Series in Washington.

but as the Nationals showed with Max Scherzer and Patrick Corbin, sometimes it leads to a championship.

For what it's worth, Bob Nightengale of USA TODAY Sports said the Yankees haven't made a formal offer to Cole yet, though the club plans to make one this week. During this time of year, both sides—front office personnel and player agents—leaked details to the press to help establish leverage. What we can generally take from this is that the Yankees

are hot for Cole and he's going to get a record-setting contract from some team, even if it's not the Yankees.

Meanwhile, right-hander Junior Guerra and the Arizona Diamondbacks have agreed to a one-year contract that guarantees \$2.65 million, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Sunday because the agreement, first reported by The Athletic, had

not been announced.

Guerra was 9-5 with a 3.55 ERA in 71 relief appearances last season for Milwaukee, striking out 77 and walking 36 in 83 2/3 innings. He was primarily a starter from 2016-18 and is 25-21 with a 3.81 ERA in part of five seasons with the Chicago White Sox (2015) and Brewers.

Red Sox interested in Porcello

The Boston Red Sox may be

trying to cut some payroll this off-season, but that isn't going to stop them from targeting some free agents. And that may include one of their own.

The Red Sox are having talks with Rick Porcello about a potential reunion. While the Red Sox may be interested in Porcello, it's unclear how aggressive the Red Sox will be in their pursuit.

Porcello, soon to be 31, has spent the past five seasons with the Red Sox after being

acquired in exchange for Yoenis Cespedes, Alex Wilson, and Gabe Speier. He won the Cy Young Award in his second year with the team, 2016, but he has had issues in the seasons since that campaign.

In 2019, Porcello endured his worst campaign as a pro, logging a career-worst 5.52 ERA and 7.4 K/9, his worst mark since joining the Red Sox. Still, he posted a 14-12 record and still profiles as a solid back-end starter because of his ability to eat innings.



SAN DIEGO

(AP)—Marvin Miller, the union leader who revolutionized baseball by empowering players to negotiate multimillion-dollar contracts and to play for teams of their own choosing, was elected to baseball's Hall of Fame on Sunday along with former St. Louis Cardinals catcher Ted Simmons.

After falling short in his first seven times on veterans committee ballots, Miller received 12 of 16 votes from this year's 16-man modern committee, exactly the 75% required. Simmons was on 13 ballots, and former Boston outfielder Dwight Evans was third with eight.

Miller, who died at age 95 in 2012, led the Major League Baseball Players Association from 1966-82, a time when players gained the right to free agency after six seasons of big league service, to salary arbitration and to grievance arbitration. He led the union

Union exec Marvin Miller, Simmons elected to Hall of Fame

through five work stoppages and was an adviser during three more after he retired.

Miller and Simmons will be inducted into Cooperstown during ceremonies on July 26 along with any players chosen next month by the Baseball Writers' Association of America from a ballot headed by former New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter.

After several turndowns, Miller had asked not to be considered for the Hall, calling the process "a farce." He asked his children not to participate and his son, Peter Miller, confirmed in an email to The Associated Press that planned to not attend the induction.

"It would have been a great honor 20 years ago," Miller's daughter Susan said in a telephone interview with the AP.

Simmons, involved in a high-profile contract dispute in 1972, recalled how Miller united a disparate group of players.

"Marvin would patiently wait for every single player to speak their mind," Simmons said. "No matter how inane, no matter how un-thought out, no matter how off the mark the question came, Marvin painstakingly, patiently waded through it all. And in the end, after everyone had spoke their mind, he would bring it all together and present it in a way that everyone felt as though, yes, this is exactly what we collectively think."

Simmons, an eight-time All-Star during a 21-year big league career, was a switch-hitter who batted .285 with 248 homers and 1,389 RBIs for St. Louis (1968-80), Milwaukee (1981-85) and Atlanta (1986-88).

Despite his accomplishments, Simmons was up for election by voters from the BBWAA just once. He drew only 3.7 percent support in 1994 and was removed from future BBWAA ballots.

Miller will be inducted 12 years after Bowie Kuhn, the baseball commissioner Bowie Kuhn whom Miller routinely defeated in labor negotiations, and three years after Bud Selig, the commissioner who in 1994-95 presided over the longest work stoppage in baseball's history.

"The Hall of Fame is called the Hall of Fame and Museum. Imagine a museum of baseball without Marvin Miller in it?" former union chief operating officer Gene Orza said. "It's like having a museum of modern art without Picasso in it. I guess I'm happy for all the people who are happy. But I don't think Marvin would lose any sleep one way or the other over this."

In 2008, four years before he died, Miller sent a letter to the BBWAA saying he didn't want to be considered anymore.

"He repeatedly reaffirmed that wish during his lifetime,

as well as his intention not to participate in any HOF activity if elected," Peter Miller wrote in an email to the AP. "He requested that I do likewise, and I'm sure all his well-wishers will understand that I am bound to honor his wishes. So the HOF results this year change nothing."

Peter Miller called baseball free agency "an integral part of the story of American freedom" and said a reception in his father's honor will be held at National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., on April 22, to mark the display of a photograph of his father.

Players averaged \$19,000 in 1967, when the union first started calculating, and just over \$240,000 during Miller's final year. The average is now over \$4 million.

"He gave players freedom and money that has made the game better for everyone," Hall of Fame catcher Johnny

Bench tweeted.

Miller received 44% of the votes in 2003 and 63% in 2007 when all Hall of Famers could participate on a veterans panel. After the Hall downsized the veterans committees, he got three of 12 votes later in 2007 from a committee considering executives that elected Kuhn.

"I am surprised," said Donald Fehr, the union's head from 1983-2009. "I have long thought that eventually academics if no one else would create the necessary momentum to rectify the omission, rectify the wrong. I'm glad to see that they have bestowed that recognition. It's long overdue and immensely deserved."

Miller got seven of 12 votes in 2009 and then, when the format was changed again, he got 11 of 16 from an expansion era committee in 2010—falling one vote short. He received six votes or fewer of 16 in 2013 and seven of 16 from the new modern era committee in 2017.

Davis scores 50 as Lakers tame T-Wolves



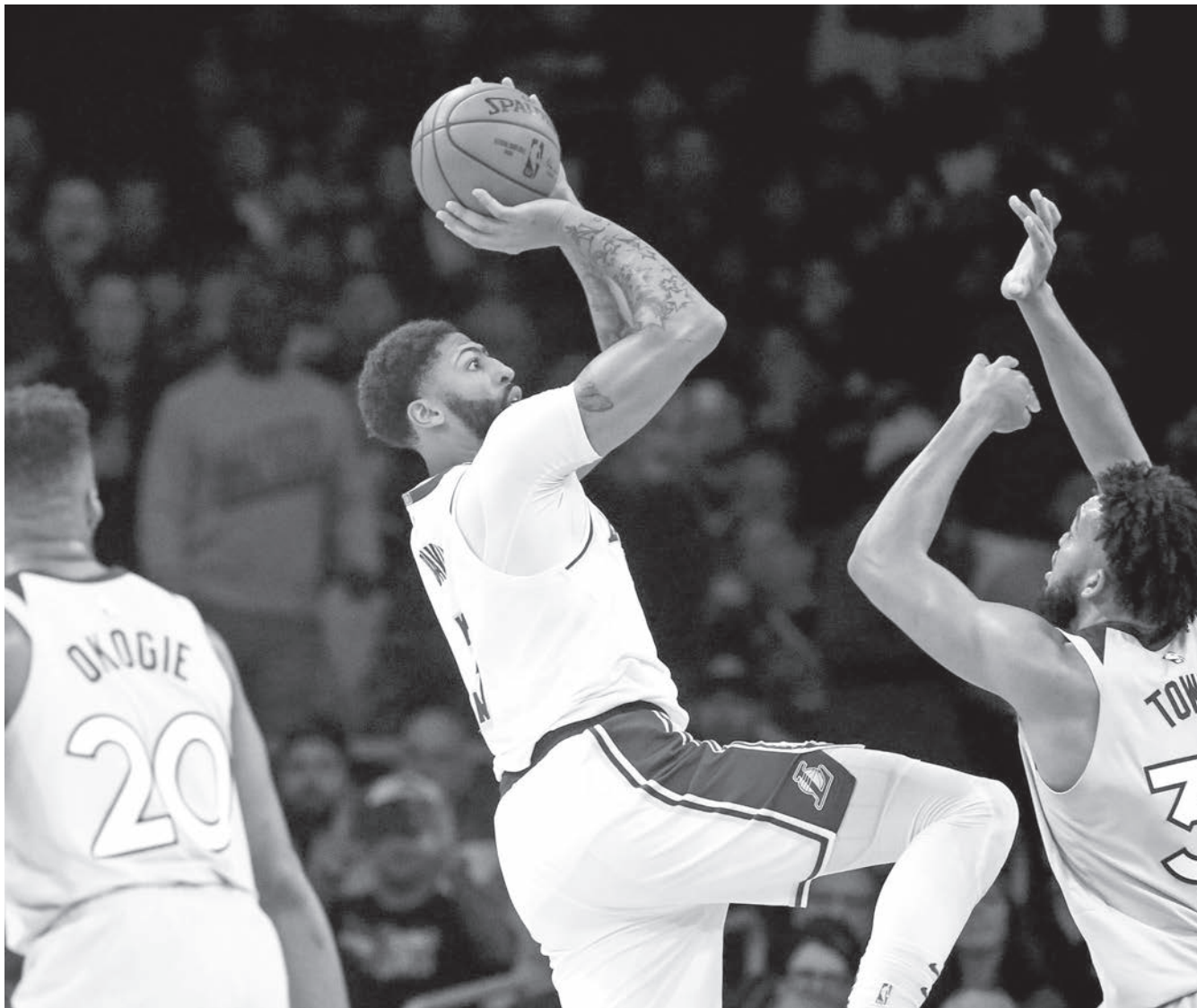
LOS ANGELES (AP)—Anthony Davis had a season-high 50 points and the Los Angeles Lakers improved to a league-best 21-3 with a 142-125 win over the Minnesota Timberwolves on Sunday night.

Davis hit a floater with 4:39 remaining to reach 50 points for the fourth time in his career. He was 20 of 29 from the field and made all 10 of his free throws to go along with seven rebounds and six assists.

LeBron James had 32 points and 13 assists despite committing four fouls in the first half. Alex Caruso added 16 points as the Lakers won their fourth straight and improved to 10-2 at home.

Each of the Timberwolves' starters had at least 12 points. Karl-Anthony Towns and Andrew Wiggins each had 19 points as Minnesota lost its fourth straight game.

Davis had 42 points through three quarters, one more than his previous single-game best this season, 41 points in his return to New Orleans on Nov. 27.



Los Angeles Lakers' Anthony Davis (3) shoots against Minnesota Timberwolves' Karl-Anthony Towns (32) during the second half of an NBA game, Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019, in Los Angeles.

Nets 105, Nuggets 102

In New York, Spencer Dinwiddie scored 24 points and Brooklyn held off Denver for its third straight victory.

Denver had a chance to force overtime, but Jamal Murray missed a 3-pointer from the wing as time expired.

Jarrett Allen added 19 points and 11 rebounds for Brooklyn. Star guard Kyrie Irving missed his 12th straight game because of a right shoulder impingement.

Nikola Jokic had 24 points and 11 rebounds for Denver.

Kings 110, Mavericks 106

In Dallas, Nemanja Bjelica matched his career best with 30 points and Luka Doncic missed a game-tying attempt in the final seconds as Sacramento withstood a furious rally and beat the Mavericks.

Buddy Hield scored 26 points, including five 3-pointers, for Sacramento. Former Maverick Harrison Barnes scored 12, Richaun Holmes added 12 and Bogdan Bogdanovic and Trevor Ariza 10 each.

Doncic finished with 27 points, including 17 in the second half.

Thunder 108, Trail Blazers 96

In Portland, Dennis Schroder and Shai Gilgeous-Alexander each scored 21 points and Oklahoma City opened a four-game trip with a win over the Trail Blazers.

The Thunder, who led by as many as 18 points in the first half, have won four of their last five games, the team's best stretch of the season. Chris Paul finished with 20 points.

Heat 110, Bulls 105

In Miami, Tyler Herro scored 27 points, including a go-ahead 3-pointer with 38.2 seconds left in overtime, and the Heat held off Chicago to improve to 10-0 at home this season.

Herro made three 3's in overtime and another with 7.1 seconds left in regulation just to help the Heat get into the extra session. His last 3-pointer gave Miami a three-point lead.

Jimmy Butler scored 23 points for the Heat, going 17 for 21 from the foul line. Bam Adebayo had 21 points, 13 rebounds and six assists for Miami, which also got 18 from Kendrick Nunn.

Lauri Markkanen had 13 of his team-high 22 points in the third quarter for the Bulls, who got 18 from Zach LaVine and 16 from Kris Dunn. Markkanen missed a

potentially game-tying corner 3-pointer with about 1.5 seconds left in overtime.

76ers 110, Raptors 104

In Philadelphia, Tobias Harris scored 26 points and rookie Matisse Thybulle had a career-high 20 points, including a pair of free throws with 23 seconds left, to lead the 76ers past Toronto for their 12th straight home win.

Ben Simmons had 16 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists as the Sixers remained unbeaten at home this season.

Kyle Lowry, playing in his second game after missing 11 in a row due to a broken left thumb, scored 26 points, and OG Anunoby had 19 points and 10 rebounds for Toronto. The defending

champion Raptors have lost three in a row.

Joel Embiid returned from a one-game absence due to a hip injury, finishing with 10 points and eight rebounds. Embiid was benched with 2:08 remaining after committing turnovers on three straight possessions that turned a seemingly easy victory into a tight one. He had seven of Philadelphia's 17 turnovers.

Clippers 135, Wizards 119

In Washington, Kawhi Leonard had 34 points and 11 rebounds and Los Angeles bounced back from its worst loss of the season with a win over the Wizards.

Paul George scored 27 points and Montrezl Harrell had nine of his 20 in the fourth quarter for the Clippers, who improved

to 4-6 away from home two games into their six-game trip.

The victory came two days after Los Angeles opened the trip with a 119-91 loss at Eastern Conference-leading Milwaukee.

Washington's bench kept the game competitive for more than three quarters. Davis Bertans tied his season-high with 25 points, including six 3-pointers. Troy Brown Jr. scored a career-high 20 points.

Bradley Beal's 20 points were the most by a Washington starter and came off a difficult 5-for-18 shooting night.

Hawks 122, Hornets 107

In Charlotte, Trae Young had 30 points and nine assists and the Atlanta beat the Hornets

for its second win in 13 games.

Jabari Parker added 19 points and Vince Carter had 17 off the bench on 7-of-9 shooting to help the Hawks improve to 6-17.

Young had 20 points in the second half, including 14 in the decisive fourth quarter in which the Hawks blew open the game.

Miles Bridges and P.J. Washington each had 20 points to lead the Hornets. They have lost three of four on a five-game homestand. Washington left the game midway through the fourth quarter after rolling his right ankle on a drive.

Atlanta's Alex Len finished with 13 points and 10 rebounds and played a big role in helping turn the tide of the game in the third quarter.

NASSAU—When the U.S. Presidents Cup squad gathered for a team meeting in August during The Northern Trust at Liberty National, U.S. captain Tiger Woods stressed that his prospective team members keep the competitive juices flowing.

"I told all the guys at Liberty when we had our meeting, back in '98, we weren't ready to play," said Woods, referring to the Internationals' lone victory in 12 editions, a nine-point rout of Jack Nicklaus' American squad at Royal Melbourne.

"It was, again, late in the year in December. The season ended differently, players shut it down and then they geared right back up for Australia and

Tiger-led US Presidents Cup team all set

we got beat pretty badly, so it was important for these guys to continue playing."

Thanks to a longer fall schedule that extends into mid-November and Woods' annual Hero World Challenge, they have. Eleven of the 12 Americans who will tee it up at Royal Melbourne played in the Bahamas, with only Dustin Johnson missing out because of a knee injury.

"I'm very happy with most of the team," Woods said after his solo-fourth finish at Albany. "The fact that 11 out of 12 guys played this week, some played

well, some didn't, but at least they were able to knock off some rust, get some feel."

Among the Team USA competitors, Patrick Reed led the way with a third-place showing, two shots back of Henrik Stenson, a deficit made important after Reed was docked two shots in the third round for improving his lie in the sand. (Reed said it was accidental, but Aussie Marc Leishman said it could give the home fans in Australia some "ammo.")

Reed not worried about

rules violation 'ammo' from Prez Cup fans

Even with the rules mishap, Reed chalked the week up as a good one. He debuted new irons at Albany—custom-made GrindWorks blades—and missed just two greens during a final-round 66, his third such score of the tournament.

"I look forward to using them next week and look forward to using them [next year] because they felt great," Reed said.

Justin Thomas also notched a top-5 finish, though it could've been better had it not

been for a double bogey on his 72nd hole, and five others ended up in the top 10: third-round leader Gary Woodland (T-7), Rickie Fowler (ninth) and three players at T-10 (Tony Finau, Xander Schauffele and Webb Simpson).

Finau's performance was more impressive than his finish, as he opened in 79 before shooting 68-69-65.

"Looking for some good mojo just going into next week," said Finau, who had finished outside the top 50 in three straight starts entering Hero. "I know I shot myself

out of the tournament in the first round, but I'm just really proud of the way I hung in there and fought back."

Is there pressure on U.S. team being heavily favored at Presidents Cup?

Fowler hadn't played since the Tour Championship in August after getting married in October and contracting a bacterial infection on his honeymoon.

"It was nice to see him get four rounds in, get the feeling back in his hands and his body and hitting shots again," Woods said of Fowler. "It's so different playing at home for cash versus playing out here with a scorecard, so it was nice to see."



Chiefs top AFC West; Ravens clinch playoffs



BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP)—Lamar Jackson threw three

touchdown passes and the Baltimore Ravens became the AFC's first team to clinch a playoff berth following a 24-17 win over the Buffalo Bills on Sunday.

Baltimore extended its franchise-best winning streak to nine and improved to 11-2, its best record through 13 games in team history.

Jackson finished 16 of 25 for 145 yards and appeared to blow open the game by putting the Ravens up 24-9 following a 4-yard touchdown pass to Willie Snead with 9:49 left.

Buffalo's Josh Allen responded with a seven-play, 78-yard touchdown drive capped by his 3-yard pass to Cole Beasley, who dived inside the left pylon. The same two then hooked up on a 2-point conversion.

Chiefs 23, Patriots 16

In Foxborough, Kansas City clinched the AFC West when Bashaud Breeland knocked away Tom Brady's fourth-down pass attempt to Julian Edelman in the end zone.

The Chiefs survived a series of mistakes and questionable calls by the officials to hold off the Patriots. Combined with Oakland's loss to Tennessee, the Chiefs (9-4) took their division. And the loss ended the Patriots' 21-game home win streak in the regular season and playoffs, which was tied for the longest in team history. It also was the third-longest string in NFL history.

New England (10-3) has lost two in a row.

Patrick Mahomes was 26 of 40 for 283 yards, a touchdown and interception. Travis Kelce added a 10-yard TD run. Brady was under pressure all night and finished 19 of 36 for 169 yards, a touchdown and interception.

49ers 48, Saints 46

In New Orleans, Jimmy Garoppolo passed for 349 yards and four touchdowns, Robbie Gould kicked a 30-yard field goal as time expired. Garoppolo's clutch completion to tight end George Kittle for a 39-yard gain—plus a defensive facemask penalty—on fourth-and-2 from the San Francisco 33 helped set up Gould's winning kick.

The Saints took their last lead on Drew Brees' fifth touchdown pass of the game -- an 18-yarder to TreQuan Smith with 53 seconds left. But Brees' pass on an attempted 2-point conversion fell incomplete, leaving New Orleans' lead at one point.

The victory kept San Fran-



cisco (11-2) in strong position to capture the top seed in the NFC playoffs. The Niners can clinch a playoff berth if Seattle loses to the Rams in a night game.

Rams 28, Seahawks 12

In Los Angeles, Jared Goff passed for 293 yards and two touchdowns, Todd Gurley ran for 79 yards and a fourth-quarter TD and the Rams prevented Seattle from clinching a playoff berth.

Robert Woods and Cooper Kupp caught TD passes while the Rams (8-5) kept their playoff hopes burning and ended the Seahawks' five-game winning streak.

Titans 42, Raiders 21

In Oakland, Ryan Tannehill threw for 391 yards and three touchdowns, Derrick Henry ran for two scores and the Titans won their fourth straight game.

The Titans (8-5) bounced back from a deflected interception on the opening drive to score TDs on five of their next seven possessions to improve to 6-1 with Tannehill as

the starting quarterback. The win moved them into a tie for first place in the AFC South with Houston, with the teams set to meet twice in the final three weeks.

Steelers 23, Cardinals 17

In Glendale, Diontae Johnson returned a punt 85 yards for a touchdown and caught a pass for another score.

Pittsburgh's defense had three crucial interceptions in the second half -- two by Joe Haden and another by T.J. Watt—to end Arizona drives, including two that had ventured into Steelers' territory.

Pittsburgh (8-5) won for the seventh time in eight games to stay in the AFC playoff race.

Chargers 45, Jaguars 10

In Florida, Philip Rivers threw for 314 yards and three touchdowns, including an 84-yarder to Austin Ekeler that was the longest completion of the quarterback's 16-year NFL career.

It was Jacksonville's fifth consecutive lopsided loss, all

by at least 17 points. The 1986 Tampa Bay Buccaneers were the last NFL team to drop five straight by at least 17.

Packers 20, Redskins 15

In Green Bay, Aaron Jones rushed for a season-high 134 yards and a touchdown on just 16 carries. Jones had his third 100-yard rushing game of the season and hauled in six catches for 58 yards. With fewer than three minutes left in the game, the third-year running back had more total yards (192) than the Redskins (187).

Buccaneers 38, Colts 35

In Tampa, Jameis Winston threw for 456 yards and four touchdowns, helping the Buccaneers rally to beat the reeling Colts.

Winston overcame throwing three more interceptions and having one returned for a TD for the fifth time season to wipe out a 14-point second-half deficit. He led the Bucs (6-7) to their third straight win and fourth in five games.

^{AP}
Baltimore Ravens tight end Nick Boyle (86) is upended by Buffalo Bills strong safety Micah Hyde (23) during the second half of an NFL game in Orchard Park, N.Y., Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019.

Falcons 40, Panthers 20

In Atlanta, Matt Ryan threw the longest touchdown pass of his career and became the 10th quarterback in NFL history to reach 50,000 yards.

The Panthers (5-8) were officially eliminated from playoff contention with their fifth straight loss, which ruined the debut of interim coach Perry Fewell. He took over at the beginning of the week after longtime coach Ron Rivera was fired.

Atlanta (4-9) snapped a two-game losing streak and swept the season series with its 1-85 rival.

Broncos 38, Texans 24

In Houston, rookie Drew Lock threw for 309 yards and three touchdowns, Kareem Jackson had an interception and returned a fumble 70 yards for a touchdown against his former team.

Lock, who made his NFL debut in a win over the Chargers last week, threw for 235 yards with three TDs in the first half. It was the most

yards passing in a first half by the Broncos since Peyton Manning had 282 in Week 5 of 2014.

Browns 27, Bengals 19

In Cleveland, Nick Chubb ran for 106 yards—99 after half-time—and Baker Mayfield and Kareem Hunt had rushing touchdowns.

The Bengals have lost 10 straight AFC North games.

Denzel Ward returned an interception 61 yards for Cleveland's first score and the Browns (6-7) got a huge late break. Mayfield's third interception was reversed with a rare interference call to bounce back after a discouraging loss at Pittsburgh last week.

Vikings 20, Lions 7

In Minneapolis, Danielle Hunter had three of Minnesota's five sacks to spearhead a resurgence by the defense to stick the Lions with their sixth straight loss.

Kirk Cousins passed for 242 yards and a touchdown in an efficient if unspectacular performance. Dalvin Cook had 75 yards from scrimmage and a rushing score on 20 touches over three quarters as the Vikings (9-4) took it easy on their star tailback after an injury to his collarbone area forced him out of the previous game.

Beckham wants out of Browns

It's starting to look like Odell Beckham's first year in Cleveland might also be his last year in Cleveland. Although Beckham is currently under contract with the Browns through the 2023 season, it appears that he'd prefer to leave the team well before that.

According to Jay Glazer of Fox Sports, Beckham hasn't been trying to hide the fact that he wants out of Cleveland. Apparently, the Browns receiver has been going up to opposing coaches before games and telling them to "come get me, come get me." According to Glazer, Beckham has also been saying the same thing to other players. Beckham seems to be getting frustrated playing in the Browns offense. Through 12 games, the three-time Pro Bowler has just 57 catches for 805 yards and two touchdowns. Beckham has also has gone six consecutive games without topping 100 receiving yards, marking the first time that's ever happened in his career.

One other thing that makes it seem like Beckham is ready to move on is the

fact that he gave an incredibly vague answer on Thursday when he was asked if he wants to return to Cleveland in 2020.

"I couldn't sit here and tell you whether I'm gonna be here, want to be here, don't want to be here," Beckham said. "This is exactly where I'm at now and I wouldn't rather be anywhere else. Like I said, God has a plan. In the offseason everything will figure itself out ... I just follow (God's) lead."

So you do want to return to Cleveland or you don't?

"No one knows what the future holds. I couldn't tell you what's going to happen," Beckham said.

Although Beckham is under contract until 2023, it would be pretty easy for the Browns to unload him this offseason. For one, if they decided they wanted to trade him, there would almost certainly be dozens of suitors. In a worst-case scenario, the Browns could also cut him, since they'd only take a dead cap hit of \$2.75 million, but it's highly unlikely they'd just give him away without getting any compensation in return.

Lizama, Harding share top honors in golf tourney

US Soccer defends controversial hiring policy

CHICAGO—On the third floor of U.S. Soccer House, an old mansion that serves as the headquarters for the U.S. Soccer Federation, there's a bunch of clustered desks in one small room with whiteboards on the walls. This is where Gregg Berhalter and the coaching staff for the U.S. men's national do their jobs: all together, face to face, in the same room.

Not only is the coaching staff working from the same office, which is new, but the USMNT staff is in the same building as most of the federation's employees, having casual water cooler run-ins with U.S. Soccer's press officers, legal counsel or social media gurus.

That's exactly how Earnie Stewart, U.S. Soccer's first sporting director, and president Carlos Cordeiro want it. It's the result of the federation's new "Chicago pol-



icy," which asks everyone to move to Chicago and work at U.S. Soccer House or risk losing their job.

"In my mind, it's unbelievable that our coaches are not together all the time," Stewart told a small group of reporters Friday. "It's one thing have formal conversations with each other, and these days you can do everything by computer and wifi, but we've now seen with myself, Kate (Markgraf) and the coaches, when you go to the coffee machine—and I know it sounds very simple—you're talking about soccer once again."

For Stewart, who vows the U.S. will build a cohesive style of play across every team at every age group, it's a necessity. But the policy has been controversial within the American soccer community since it was implemented last year.



Members of the Ye Olde Saipanne Golfe Clubbe braved windy conditions at the Kingfisher Golf Links last Saturday to vie for the 2019 Champion Golfer of the Year honors.

The competition was very tight indeed, with the Top 5 players finishing within three strokes of each other. For the first time in the six-year history of the tournament, two golfers, "Juj" Juan Lizama and "Double" Dan Harding, tied for first place with identical net scores of 74. After a quick meeting of the rules committee, it was decided that the two aging aces would, in the spirit of amity and brotherhood upon which



the club was founded, share the title of Ye Olde Saipanne Golfe Clubbe Champion Golfer of the Year. The two champions shook hands, split the prize money and the post-tournament banquet commenced.

Alone in third place with a net score of 75 was the 2017 champion Wil "Paki" Maui. Rounding out the Top 5 were Timothy "Tex" Brasuell with a net score of 76 and Ron "Coozy" Wright, with a net score of 77. (PR)

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Juan Lizama, left, and Dan Harding show the cash prize they are sharing for winning the Ye Olde Saipanne Golfe Clubbe 2019 Champion Golfer of the Year honors.

TWIN

From Page 28

gory, Team RAM-PAG's Nelson Pagaduan and Ding Ramos led the finishers' list after recording 4:35:09. D'Kings came in at second with its 4:56:54 and was followed by Team Triple J (5:04:44), Team Pangasinan (5:05:34), and Agape Rangers (5:47:07).

For the 4-person road bike race, The Bike Shop Saipan's Alex Gozon, Bobby Vargas, Aldrin Sta. Ana, and Jojo Valencia logged 4:12:11 to take the top honors in the men's division, while in the mixed event, Chain Reaction's Loreto Dedoyco, Rommel Isidro, and Vernice and Andrew Estepa submitted 4:30:11 to win over Sure-Let's Do It's Derek Chambers, Tony Stearns, Kathy Ruszala, and Travis Spaeth (4:34:39).

Quinn and Kennedy's Kanae Quinn and Heather Kennedy completed the win-

ners list in the relay race after registering 4:05:05—the second fastest overall in the 2-person division.

Meanwhile, Noe Valdimimo was the overall winner in the individual MTC race

after completing the course in 4:04:41. He crossed the finished line less than a minute ahead of Charlie Sending, who recorded 4:05:27. Hernando Cristobal tallied the third best time in the MTB with his

4:39:39, while other finishers in the MTB division were Buboy Aguilar (4:49:48), lone female competitor Ayano Braxton (4:57:12), Pax Guevarra (5:11:34), and Bernardo Laborce (5:27:22).



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan general manager Wendi Herring, center, joins Team Fiesta 1 and 2 bikers for a group photo after receiving their medals during the awards ceremony for the 2019 Hell of Marianas Century Cycle Race last Saturday at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort.

LADY

From Page 28

Meanwhile, Aliyah Fernandez sizzled for 24 points for CTSI, making 11 of the squad's last 16 points to foil the Baby Ol'Aces' comeback bid in the second half. Fernandez knocked in three straight triples at one point midway through the second half and also nailed CTSI's last basket in the game.

First Game

Ol'Aces 64—Santos 22, C. Camacho 10, D. Camacho 9,

Pangelinan 8, Deleon Guerrero 6, Aldan 4, Rangamar 3.

Rollers 15—Lumabi 13, Buenabaja 2.

Scoring by halves: 36-2, 64-15.

Second Game

CTSI 46—Fernandez 24, Watanabe 10, Pagarao 5, Alegre 4, Kautz 3.

Baby Ol'Aces 44—S. Camacho 15, Joyce 10, Roligat 6, Rangamar 4, Apostol 3, Ramarui 2.

Scoring by halves: 21-13, 46-44.

KANOA

From Page 28

shoved by one Island Star player, as they jockeyed for position and the former rammed into Jin. Players from both teams soon joined the commotion and with most of them trying to pacify Jin and Piring, who was near Zapanta, it took a while before the brewing tension dissipated.

The confrontation happened in the 69th minute of the match with the game tied at 2-all. When the duel resumed, Ian Maniago came in for the disqualified Piring, while Jin was also replaced.

Island Star was left without an offensive threat and the team clearly missed its key player with its limited scoring options, as the group made only one goal after that and it came when Kanoa was already on the way to the title-clinching win.

Kanoa took the momentum of the game after the commotion with Maniago stepping up and delivering the hat trick in the remaining minutes of the



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

After their heated game in the 2019 Fall Men's M-League last Thursday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville, Kanoa and Island Star players meet at center court to exchange high-fives.

game to finish with four goals. The young gun gave Kanoa its first goal and equalized the game when he hit the back of the net in the 13th minute.

Five minutes earlier, Feng Yu put Island Star on the board, while Xiong Zhe Li's goal in the 26th minute handed the squad the halftime lead, 2-1.

Island Star kept the shaky

lead early in the second half before Zapanta converted a penalty kick to tie the game anew. The match remained in a deadlock until Kanoa got the momentum it needed after the incident midway through the second half.

After Maniago came in for Piring, he and Andrew Omelau fooled Island Star's

defense as the latter started Kanoa's attack only to send the ball to the former for the cross that gave them the lead in the 72nd minute. Two minutes later, Maniago scored another one off his own miss, while his third goal was recorded in the 76th giving Kanoa the comfortable advantage

A few seconds after Mania-

go's fourth goal, Kai-Jun Ma broke Island Star's silence, but that was not enough to spark the squad's comeback, as Kanoa wisely used the clock to preserve the lead and secure the Division B championship.

It was a sorry loss for Island Star, which won its first five matches only to drop its last three, allowing Kanoa to steal the title.

Meanwhile, Paire won its final game of the season in Division A after nosing out the Old B Bank in a make-up match last Wednesday, 3-2.

Danny Agulto towed Paire

to victory, as he made all the team's three goals after scoring in the 16th, 50th, and 59th minute. Paire finished the season with a 5-1-2 mark for second place behind All Blue.

The Old B Bank had only one win in eight games to finish in fourth place, just slightly ahead of cellar dweller Korean Football Association on Saipan. Fradel Sedillo and Mickey Kim scored in the Old B Bank's last match of the season with the former lighting up the board in the 52nd minute and the latter 11 minutes later.

M-LEAGUE FINAL STANDINGS

Division A

TEAMS	W	D	L	PTS	GA	GA	GD
All Blue	7	1	0	22	37	10	27
Paire	5	1	2	16	28	15	13
TanHoldings	5	0	3	15	32	24	8
Old B Bank	1	0	7	3	8	28	-20
KFAS	1	0	7	3	11	39	-28

Division B

TEAMS	W	D	L	PTS	GA	GA	GD
Kanoa	6	0	2	18	38	25	13
Island Star	5	0	3	15	28	24	4
Matansa	5	0	3	15	24	23	1
Shirley's	4	0	4	12	28	23	5
WNT	0	0	8	0	15	39	-24



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7-year, \$245-
million offer
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**Davis
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Lakers tame
T-Wolves**

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Kanoa rules Fall season

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER

Kanoa Football Club topped Division B of the 2019 Fall Men's M-League after downing Island Star, 5-3, in a heated game last Thursday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Team Fiesta 1's Willy Barbo pedals along Beach Road during last Saturday's Hell of Marianas Century Cycle Race.

Twin victories for Team Fiesta

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER

Team Fiesta 1 and 2 led the way in the relay event in last Saturday's Hell of Marianas Century Cycle Race.



Team Fiesta 1's Willy Barbo and Harold Balana were the fastest team to complete the 100-kilometer race as they reached the finish line at the former Mariana Resort & Spa in 4:02:58. Team Fiesta 1 also ruled the 2-person road bike category, beating Team Costco's Daniel Banez and Rolly

Quihon (4:24:12), Agape Pegasus' Yuhang Miao and Li Zhu (5:04:52), and Agape Yirah's Liming Jia and Li Dai (6:14:14).

In the 4-person MTB division, Team Fiesta 2's Elmer Esdrelon, Junar Guiab, Darwin Barbo, and Matt Buenabajo clocked in at 4:49:22 to prevail against Team Old School's Raymund Tolentino, Rommel Bartolo, James Abuy, and Fred Remillosa (4:51:56).

In the 2-person MTB category,

See TWIN on Page 27



Kanoa finished the season with a 6-0-2 win-draw-loss record, just one win ahead of Island Star and Matansa, which concluded the competition with similar 5-0-3 marks. Island Star won the tiebreak for second place with its higher goal difference, 4-1.

With the Kanoa-Island Star match deciding the winner of the Division B title in the Fall season, the opposing teams engaged in a highly-physical match that resulted to the ejection of two players—Island Star's Feng Chun Jin and Kanoa's JC Piring.

The two players received red cards stemming from pushing incidents, while Kanoa was getting ready for a throw-in at the sideline. Kanoa's Ruselle Zapanta was

See KANOA on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Kanoa Football Club's Markus Toves, left, attempts to deflect a shot from Island Star's Heo Rong during their game in Division B of the 2019 Fall Men's M-League last Thursday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.



Lady Ol'Aces, CTSI win debuts

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER



The Lady Ol'Aces and CTSI recorded contrasting victories against their respective opponent during the opening of the 2019 TanHoldings Christmas Basketball Tournament last Saturday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

The Lady Ol'Aces played in the curtain-raiser in the women's division and walloped the Rollers, 64-15, while CTSI eked out a 46-44 win over the Baby Ol'Aces in the second match.

Eleina Santos powered the Lady Ol'Aces to the easy victory after firing 22 points. Cassandra Camacho also finished in twin digits in their debut in the four-team competition, adding 10 markers.

With Santos leading the



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

CTSI's Irish Pagarao tries to save the ball from going out during their game against the Lady Ol'Aces yesterday in the women's division of the 2019 TanHoldings Christmas Basketball Tournament at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Lady Ol'Aces' offense, the early favorites built a commanding 36-2 lead at halftime. Marlene Lumabi scored the only field goal for the hapless Rollers in the first half, while Santos delivered 10 straight points for the Ol'Aces to anchor the breakaway. The former CNMI National Team member wrapped up the first half with 18 points and with the win already secured for the Lady Ol'Aces, Santos let her teammates finished off the Rollers in the last 20 minutes of play.

Desrei Camacho and Jaime Pangelinan were the other Lady Ol'Aces who contributed to the team's lopsided win with the former chipping in 9 points and the latter logging 8. Lumabi paced the Rollers with her 13 points, while Marla Buenabajo was only the second player on the team to score (2 points) in their first game in the tournament.

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